Christian Courier

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The earth is the Lord's — do we 'care'?

Conference explores management of God's resources

Bert Witvoet

BRAMPTON, Ont. — Twenty-four hours is not a lot of time in which to develop a strategy for stewardship education. But when 25 people take it upon themselves to work at it, the total number of hours becomes 600.

Twenty-five people — that's how many gathered in the Second Christian Reformed Church in Brampton on Nov. 17 and 18 to talk about developing an education plan for stewardship. All of them were representatives of Christian organizations affiliated with Christian Stewardship Services (CSS), which sponsored the event.

Redirected donations

Organizer and CSS board member Rudy Hulst explained how the idea got started. "It was said that there was a lack of stewardship awareness in the Christian Reformed Churches," he said. "That conclusion had been drawn from the observation that there was a drop in giving in the churches."

But CSS found out that its member organizations, like Citizens for Public Justice, Institute for Christian Studies and Redeemer College, did not experience a drop in giving. So CSS concluded that the problem was not so much a lack of stewardship as a redirection of donations.

Nevertheless, the CSS board thought it was time to do more than simply advise groups and individuals on how to invest money wisely. The time had come to address the whole concept of stewardship in God's kingdom, says Hulst.

At the beginning of the conference, Ben Vandezande of Diaconal Ministries in Eastern Canada (formerly All-Ontario Diaconal Conference) reminded the group that stewardship calls us to take care of the four t's of life: time, talents, trees and treasures and to open them up to God.

Since real Calvinists always like to probe for the essence of things, this "hook" eventually steered the discussion into asking the question: What is really meant by stewardship? All participants agreed that

See **IDENTIFY**—*p.2...*

PHOTO: BEN VANDEZANDE

Conferees sculpt aspects of stewardship. From l. to r. Henry Bosch, Lillian Grissen, Rudy Hulst, Harry Houtman, Robert Koole, Aileen Van Ginkel, Ellen Vanderkloet.

Frontline AIDS workers suffer, too

Two nurses journey from their own judgmentalism

Irene Bom

BEAMSVILLE, Ont. — Rejection. Loneliness. Running into closed doors. Fear of telling.

Such are the emotional struggles of AIDS victims that public health nurse Ruth Lamoureux describes every time she makes a public presentation on the fatal disease.

But they also describe the plight of Christian health care workers involved with AIDS patients. They often feel caught between colleagues who think they're "too religious" for the job and churches who still feel remote from the disease.

"My first year on my job was draining, and the church was not there to fill the vacuum," says the Niagara region nurse, whose job involves visiting patients who have just found out that they are HIV positive and are often considering suicide.

"As a whole, the church is not supportive [of AIDS patients and workers] and not ready to deal with the disease," Lamoureux says.

A member of a local Mennonite Brethren Church, she has on her own time brought her wake-up call to over 1,000 Christians at various Ontario settings, including the Women Alive conference in Waterloo, Ont., this spring.

A former nurse with new mothers, Lamoureux was bumped into the newly-formed AIDS unit after layoffs in 1990. In the first year she "went through trauma" as the neat evangelical frameworks that she had grown up with of "how life should be" were ripped apart.

"For someone who had never even been to a restricted movie, I could not believe the behaviors that patients were describing to me. This job forced me to face myself and my own tendency to judge," says Lamoureux.

Didn't tell

She soon found out that she also had to face the silence of church members who didn't understand her job.

"They were afraid of what I was going to say. And I didn't even want to tell them what I did," she adds.

But she says she doesn't judge the church for shying away.

She's hardly the one to judge other Christians.

See **GET**—*p.2...*

PHOTO: IRENE BOM

Ruth Lamoureux is used to talking about condoms and hope.

In this issue:

A story about cash or cheque.....p.10

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CRC young people and intimacy.....p.13

Thinkbit

What do groundhogs and people have in common? Both go into hiding when they see their own shadow.

Casey Vander Stelt (Self-Discovery)

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News

Get ready to love, AIDS nurse urges churches

...continued from p.1

After all, only a few years before starting her current job she stood up at a Bible study and denounced AIDS as God's judgment on the homosexual community.

"I was very good at judgment, but not at unconditional love," says Lamoureux. "I had to learn to hear God ask, How will they ever see my love if all they can see is your judgment?"

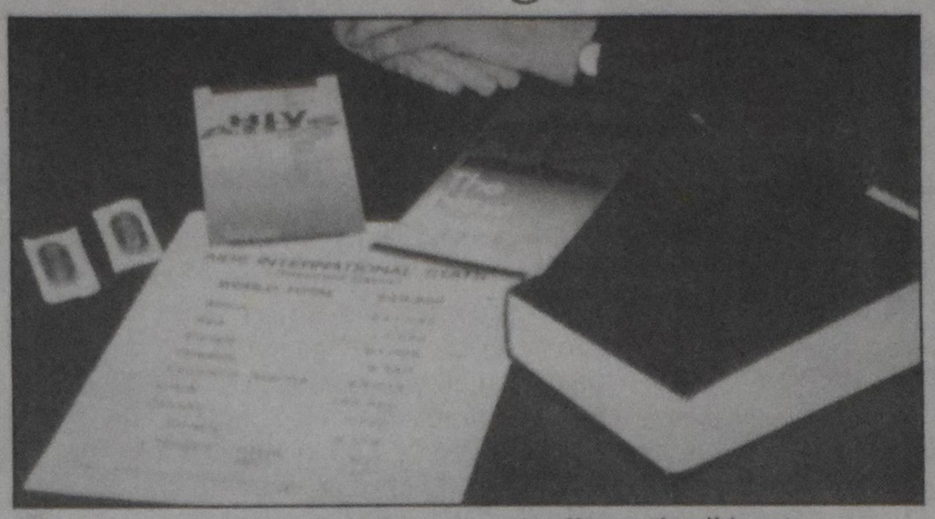

PHOTO: IRENE BOM

Lamoureux is urging churchs to "get it all together" in time to be effective

Align head with heart

She's not the only AIDS worker who has had to embark on such a personal journey that gained similar responses.

"I've had to bring my head into alignment with my heart with this job," notes Mary-Anne Meyer, a native of Canada working for the past several years as a nurse practitioner at a community health clinic in Chicago's inner-city Humbolt Park neighborhood. Many of the patients she sees are infected with the AIDS virus and are substance abusers.

She says she had to let go of any tendency to judge in order to survive her demanding job.

"This job has a high burnout rate, and you won't be able to last if you have to struggle with being judgmental," she says.

Meyer says the church is "not the number one area where I receive support."

Meyer was a member of a suburban Christian Reformed Church during her previous job in the upscale Evanston area of Chicago. She has since switched to a United Presbyterian Church and says she has come to "a simpler understanding of God's grace."

Line drawn

One of the hurdles both Lamoureux and Meyer had to overcome in their jobs was the line drawn between "victims" and "deservers" of AIDS.

"We still think that HIV is not really our problem unless the person is a victim. Babies and hemophiliacs are the innocent ones that we focus on," says Meyer.

Somehow it's a dividing line that doesn't exist with people who get lung cancer from smoking, Meyer points out. "We have such a double standard," she notes.

Meyer's own difficulty of coping with her job has helped to erase that division between sinner and victim for her, she says.

"I look at all the resources I have, and how much pastoral counselling and work I've still had to do to cope with my job, and I can't judge my patients for turning to drugs," says Meyer.

Lamoureux is urging Christians to get ready now for the day when someone with AIDS will come to their church looking for support.

"We say we hate the sin but love the sinner when it comes to homosexuality, but sometimes I wonder if we don't just hate the sin and forget to do the loving," she says.

"If churches could just get it together now, they could have the most incredible ministry of their lives," she adds.

But churches are copping out if they only take action when the disease hits close to home, says Meyer.

"We're finally starting to deal with the issue of AIDS hitting the church," she says. "But that's still missing out on our whole responsibility to the world."

Money the key to stewardship?

Bert Witvoet

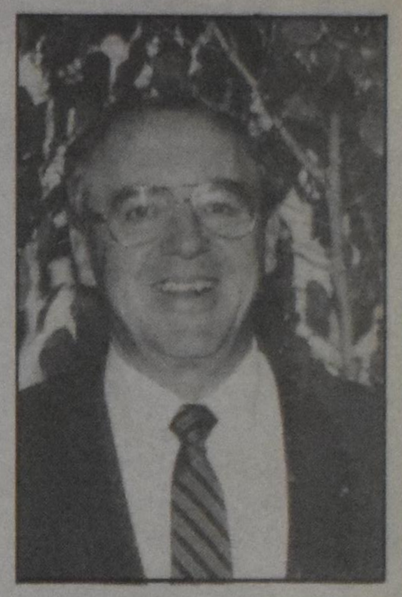

PHOTO: BERT WITVOET

Dirk Vander Steen.

BRAMPTON, Ont. — In a separate interview conducted during the CSS-sponsored stewardship conference organizer Bill Van Geest points to the fact that the Christian Reformed community has a rich heritage of stewardship theology and practice. "The immigrant experience taught us frugality. But we only have a slice of the stewardship issue," he adds. "We don't own the territory."

Van Geest also remarks that the CRC community is influenced by the spirit of excess and individual fulfilment. "As a result there's a gap between our theology and our lifestyle. The two are not in sync anymore," he says.

All the Christian organizations seem to agree on the need for better stewardship education, says Van Geest. But he points out that the Barnabas Foundation, the American Christian Reformed counterpart of CSS, represented at the conference by Dr. Dirk Vander Steen and Lillian Grissen, uses a different approach to stewardship.

The Barnabas Foundation sees money as the key issue in addressing stewardship issues, says Van Geest, whereas the Brampton conference clearly shows a desire to address all stewardship issues in an integrated way.

Focus on money!

Dirk Vander Steen, director of Firstfruits Stewardship Project, the education wing of the Barnabas Foundation, confirms that difference.

"Jesus said four times as much about money and wealth as he did about prayer and faith," says Vander Steen. "If only we paid as much attention to money in our churches."

According to Vander Steen, most believers get caught in materialism through their possessions and money. The reason Jesus focused so much on wealth was because he wanted to break the spell that Satan held over people.

"Preachers who refuse to preach on money are missing one of the most beautiful opportunities to set people free," says Vander Steen. He believes that if an education in stewardship focused on money for four years, the other parts of our stewardship task — time, talents and trees — will follow.

What everyone at the conference agreed on, however, is that effective use of all resources is the end of all strategies. CSS plans to use the findings of the Brampton conference to take a more active role in helping Christians develop an awareness of full and integrated stewardship.

Identify the gaps in stewardship education

...continued from p.1

stewardship implies that God is the owner of all things ("The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof") and that we are accountable to him for how we use all resources.

Someone saw stewardship as an act of obedience; another saw it as a joyful act of gratitude, the emphasis being on what I *may* do rather than on what I *must* do. Ultimately the group concluded that there was no real contradiction between obedience and gratitude.

Conference leader Bill Van Geest, an independent consultant who had been asked to coordinate the workshops, introduced the topics for the next 24 hours. He asked all participants to share current efforts to educate staff, constituency or students in the following areas of stewardship: financial, creational/environmental, lifestyle, time management, skill development and other.

After that the various workshop groups were to explore where the gaps in education are. The goal of the workshops was to develop a plan for greater co-ordinated efforts in the matter of stewardship education.

Some recurring themes that came out of the workshops were: there's a gap between how we live and how we ought to live, there's a generational gap in giving and "We must recover the spiritual dynamics of joyful stewardship."

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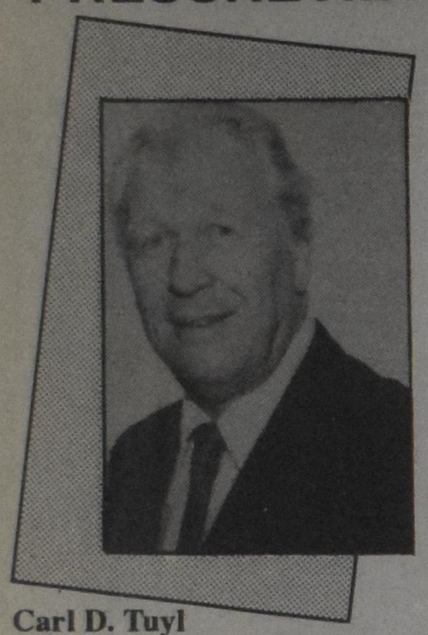

Carl D. Tuyl

Since I still have not returned to our fair dominion at the time of this issue of *Christian Courier* I will once more report items that are hanging around in my notebook like grandma's wedding dress in the attic. I begin with a statement by Chief Dan George: "When the white man came we had the land, and they had the Bibles; now they have the land and we have the Bibles." A lot of food for thought there.

★ ★ ★

Let me give you some Canadiana from Dr. Lawrence J. Peter's *Book of Quotations*: "Perhaps the most striking thing about Canada is that it is not part of the U.S." Coca Cola knows Canada is not part of the U.S. The company is spending $100,000 on increasing the availability of its soft drink across P.E.I.

★ ★ ★

Newfoundland's Premier Clyde Wells also knows his stuff. Quebec's borders, he says, were expanded in 1898 and in 1912. If Quebec separates from Canada it will surely be only with the lands it brought into Confederation in 1867.

★ ★ ★

Here's another smile of the week from the *St. John's Telegram:* "It's cruel" remarked Papa Bear to Mama Bear and the cubs, indicating a carload of humans entering the park. "Imagine being caged up like that!"

★ ★ ★

The *Los Angeles Times* has reported there's a rumour that Arnold Schwarzenegger, the movie muscle man, will run for a seat in the U.S. Senate. Ah well, he'll certainly be good at arm twisting.

★ ★ ★

There was good news in Delhi's *Statesman*, where Dr. A.K. Singh, consultant at the Central Institute of Orthopaedics in New Delhi, wrote that a local knee replacement can now be had for as little as Rs. 17,000. As soon as I get my Rs. 17,000 together I might go there. The knee I'm operating with at present is in bad repair.

★ ★ ★

While I was reading newspapers from that corner of the world I learned a lot from the *New Delhi Hindustan Times*. It writes that migrants have flocked to the Mexican city of Ciudad Juarez at the U.S. border to seize the jobs offered by the *maquiladoras*. Ciudad Juarez has grown in one generation from a sleepy frontier town to a city of well over one million people. Living conditions in the shanty towns that sprawl up the hillsides are as bad as anywhere in Mexico. A third of the city's inhabitants have no piped water. The other two thirds send all their sewage to ditches of stinking black ooze, where it mingles with untreated industrial effluent. You don't hear Mexico's president speak about that a lot, do you.

★ ★ ★

Saints are generally considered to be calm people. In fact, they are full of impatience. I don't remember where I read that. Neither do I remember how this epitaph landed up in my notebook: *Against his will/here lies George Hill/who from a cliff/fell down quit stiff./When it happened is not known,/therefore not mentioned on this stone.*

★ ★ ★

I know where the following item came from — my favorite magazine, the *Jamaican Gleaner*. I even know who wrote it — Suzann Dodd. Suzann seems a bit odd, as you can conclude from her writing. She says: "There is no such thing as an inanimate object. Take the most modern tool, the computer. Every day you follow the same procedure for start-up without problem. Then one day it refuses to boot. You check — the computer is getting power, it is properly connected, everything is exactly as it always has been, but it won't start. Why? Have you been ignoring it? When was the last time you asked how it felt? Gave it an encouraging little pat? Told it how much you care? What? Never? No wonder. Think again the next time your computer goes down or your car won't start." See why I love the *Jamaican Gleaner*? It even reported that President Bill Clinton is expected to go to Moscow for a summit with Russian president Boris Yeltsin.

★ ★ ★

The *Calgary Herald* is sad that an appeal for $1 million U.S. to protect Somali refugees in Kenyan border camps from rape by marauding Somali bandits has gone unanswered, according to U N officials. Our own CBC's Peter & Pam show reported that Somalis in Canada are engaged in a welfare scam that finances arms for warlords in Somalia. There are between 35,000 and 40,000 Somalis living in Toronto.

★ ★ ★

I am casting about for nicknames for the bigwigs in the new Canadian government in Ottawa. I will call our prime minister *Numero Uno* in Our Hearts. I hope that that is politically correct. The wrath of CC readers who took objection to the term of endearment with which I bequeathed our former prime minister still gives me sleepless nights. In a strange twist of reasoning, one of the readers even held up the Pope as someone for me to emulate. A bit hard for someone who has been married for more than four decades and has raised four children. I still feel a bit like a lion in a den of Daniels.

★ ★ ★

Cuba is not really rolling in luxury these days. According to recent figures, 10 per cent of the island's gross domestic product consists of black market transactions.

★ ★ ★

I guess this column will appear soon after Remembrance Day. Therefore I conclude with this little bit of wisdom: "If one soldier knew what an enemy soldier was thinking there would be no war."

★ ★ ★

Next week, I promise I will give you the straight stuff again.

Carl Tuyl is chaplaincy coordinator in Canada for the Christian Reformed Church and is a member of the Ontario Multifaith Council on Spiritual and Religious Care.

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Editorial

Satan's a real bad dude, but who is he?

A South African survey showed that beliefs come color coded. Most whites believe that blacks want total power, and most blacks believe that whites want the same. Most whites blame the African National Congress for the country's problems, and most blacks blame the white government. Most whites think a new government (meaning a black-majority government) will ruin the country, and most blacks think it will make the country much better.

But there's one thing both blacks and whites agree on, surprisingly: they think that Satan is enemy number one.

Now that sounds like good news because if you know who your real enemy is you also know how to protect yourself. But there's a problem here. The fact that races hold opposite views on everything else suggests that most people in South Africa don't recognize Satan in all his guises. They probably know him best as the one who tempts them into stealing, killing and drinking. But do they recognize him as the sower of distrust?

Truth comes in shades

When beliefs about political things come color coded, then the truth is not being followed. Truth should, after all, be the same for everyone, whether you're black or white. What the survey suggests is that the races nourish different truths because they don't trust each other. And that's the work of enemy number one.

There is a moral in all this for North Americans. Our beliefs also often come coded. Read the papers and find gender-coded beliefs, sexual-orientation-coded beliefs, business-coded beliefs, region-coded beliefs, even denomination-coded beliefs. In other words, truth is not just truth. No, there's a feminist truth and there's a male-chauvinist truth. There's a police truth and there's a citizen truth.

But, man, do we know about Satan. Satan is bad, real bad. You have to be on your guard against him. And the most amazing thing about Satan is that he's the other person who's a member of the group least like us.

BW

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Kids don't mind church if they're happy

Getting children and teenagers involved in the worship service is a noble thing. Not only does it signal that we consider all members of the congregation important regardless of age, but it also helps older members to realize that the Gospel loses none of its power by being told or presented at the level of a five-year-old. Whether you read, "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house" or "Don't keep on bugging your mom about getting a tricycle," the point is the same: "Be content with what you have."

But we should not worry unduly about whether or not worship services are "meaningful" for children and teenagers.

I remember enjoying worship services when I was a child. I never hated going to church even though no attempts were made at making the liturgy or sermon relevant to me. The simple act of watching people coming into church and sitting down was entertainment for me.

My own uncle and his family were fun to watch. He was a bear of a man who every Sunday morning would march into church at the head of his eight children and wife. He would come to an empty row of chairs and start ushering his kids into the row. To each kid that passed him he would give a coin for the collection. I think he derived as much satisfaction from the little drama as did most spectators.

While in church I could see my friends and classmates settle down in well-known places. We would signal things to each other. There were always a couple of girls I liked to keep an eye on during the service in the hope of catching their glance. The trick was to look away quickly enough when they started looking your way so that it looked as if you were deeply immersed in something else.

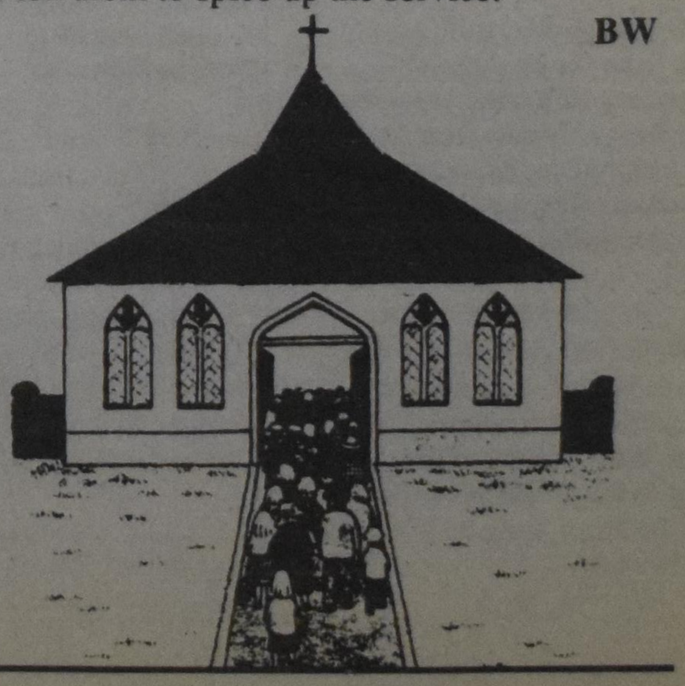
A church building has a lot of interesting lines and shapes and things to count. And then, there's always the minister to watch as he goes through his routine. For many years we had a short pastor with a bald head. It was fun to watch him take out his hanky and polish his bald head while he was preaching. He would usually make some kind of funny remark that would crack up the congregation.

No, going to church was never a bore for me. And from time to time I would even be impressed by something that the minister said.

I have a theory about kids who hate going to church. I don't think it has anything to do with church. It's more a reflection on what's going on inside their heads. Maybe there was a big fight at home. Maybe the child is unhappy about something in school. Maybe there are relationship problems at home. So going to church becomes the focus of unresolved problems at home or school.

If a kid hates going to church, it's time to stop and find out what makes him or her unhappy. There's no need to phone the church and tell them to spice up the service.

BW



Paul Marshall

Religious influences in European freedom

In my last column I tried to show how patterns of warfare in the modern world are strongly related to the traditional civilizations and cultures in the world, and that these in turn are related to the different religions that have shaped the cultures.

These patterns occur not just in Asia, Africa, Latin America or the Middle East. They also affect Europe — a continent that has, until Yugoslavia erupted, hypocritically prided itself as being beyond its religious inheritance.

With the exception of its Muslim southeastern section (especially Bosnia and Albania), Europe has been shaped by Christianity for most of the last millenium.

However, the type of Christianity has varied from area to area. In the West that has been largely Roman Catholicism, and more lately, Protestantism. In the East that has been largely Greek and Russian Orthodoxy. And these traditions have had very different understandings of and relations to the political order.

Within Catholicism there has been (until the Second Vatican Council) an ambiguous relation to religious and political freedom. Its Christian view of the person and of faith encourages a disposition toward freedom, but the desire to the pre-eminence of the church often undercut it.

There are boundaries, but where are they?

In the end it was the abiding distinction between church and state. no matter how muddled it became, that paved the way for an open society. Since its first centuries, the western Christian church has always believed that the ecclesiastical and the political orders should be distinct. It struggled, often badly, to find out *what* the boundaries should be, but it always believed that there *were* boundaries.

The result was a basic belief that the political order could not claim all of society, that there were areas exempt from its power. This single fact has probably been the most influential factor in the development of democracy in the West.

Protestantism continued this trend and filtered it through the notion of the "priesthood of all believers." The result was a view that individuals as well as churches have proper areas of freedom which should be exempt from political control. This is why Protestantism has the highest correlation (of any factor) with the spread of democracy.

However, Eastern Orthodoxy has tended to have a view that united the mission of church and state. It saw itself as the continuation of the Roman Empire, and for a millennium was centred in the city of Constantine, Constantinople (now Istanbul) until it was conquered by the Turks in the 15th century.

After that, the Russian leaders took over the mantle of Holy Roman Emperor. They took the title of Tsar (i.e., Caesar) and maintained that they were upholding a Christian empire.

History is not destiny

While there are, of course, many other factors at work in Eastern Europe, the influence of its religious inheritance is still present and should not be neglected. Many of these countries — including Russia, Bulgaria, Albania, Romania — have devised constitutions which severely restrict religious freedom. Yugoslavia has broken apart into factional religious states. Even Greece (a Common Market member) places severe controls on non-Orthodox religions.

History is not destiny. The fact that something has been the case in the past does not mean that it has to be that way in the future. However, if we want to shape the future we need to know the past. Only then will we know the present also.

Permanent changes in Eastern Europe will require not only constitutional adjustments (important as they are) but also major changes in the view of the roles of the state and the church. Here, as in so many other cases, the reappropriation of the gospel is a vital element in political transformation.

Paul Marshall is senior member in political theory at the Institute for Christian Studies, Toronto.

Reader blames CC for lack of CHP support

Over the years we have come to recognize the awesome power of the media, bound by its humanistic ideals, ready to elevate those who aspire to become its servants and mercilessly cut down the servants that cannot deliver.

The last election is but another example of how, at the prodding of the Conservative Party caucus, the media took to grooming a prospective female leader, the future prime minister of Canada. Having discovered that they had "bet on the wrong horse," the media quietly withdrew its overbearing support from the Conservative challenge. "Make or break" is the media way!

Slanted report

For no worldy reasons, but for the glory of God, we gave ourselves to work on behalf of the Christian Heritage Party during the election of 1993. We, too, experienced the power of the press at work!

No, not the power of the humanistic press, since it apparently had not found us worthy of attention on its part. We speak of the printed power of *Christian Courier*. Or, maybe it would be better to say, the power of the wily tongue of its chief editor, who reported on matters dealt with at a meeting he neither attended nor sent a representative to. We were there and, for that reason, recognized the reports as being one-sided and slanted to discredit the party.

Readers echoed your words

We have worked tenaciously during the last six years to establish the CHP in our region, hoping to get support at least from those who share with us the same religious conviction, the same articles of faith. However, as many tried to find an excuse for not joining us in our efforts to build up a new riding, they were echoing the words they had read earlier in the *Christian Courier*.

You, Sir, found a good sport in tonguelashing the struggling CHP board, its leader and its members, holding all of them up for scorn. We have read your criticisms in CC. We read the reprints in our local newspaper, too!

Agreed, the Christian Heritage Party does have its problems that come with growing maturity. Show us one group of people — a Christian school association or church assembly — which seeks to reach out in the name of Christ, that does not have its disagreements within.

There are many businesses as well as sports associations that have now or had in the past problems at the top. And what about other political parties? Over the years we have heard of a number of party caucuses being at loggerheads with their leaders and vice versa.

God blessed us

You may have let us down, many of your *readers* may have let us down, but the Ruler of the universe, *our glorious King*, did not! We will follow his clarion call as we hear it!

We were able to hold onto our status as a registered political party and, judging by current records available to us, the party had a good show of votes recorded. Therefore, we will continue to build in faith on the current results toward the next election. It may be sooner than we think!

Mr. and Mrs. C. VanGalen, Sr.
London, Ont.

Mennonites and Britons help Laos dispose of unexploded bombs

AKRON, Pa. (MCC) — From 1964 to 1973, as the Vietnam War spilled into neighboring countries, U.S. planes rained more than 500,000 loads of bombs on Laos — the equivalent of a plane-load of bombs every eight minutes for nine years.

Today Laotians are still dying from those bombs as farmers' hoes strike unexploded bombs, playful toddlers pick them up and villagers with visions of better irrigation systems dig into the earth and detonate them.

Recently the Laotian government approved a Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) plan to rid the hard-hit northern province of Xieng Khouang of the bombs. Mines Advisory Group (MAG), a British humanitarian agency running disposal programs in Afghanistan, Cambodia and other bomb-infested locations, will assist MCC by supplying bomb disposal experts, equipment and training for teams of Laotians.

Since 1977 MCC has tested various techniques. An MCC-modified tractor with heavy logging chains mounted on the front and a protective shield around the cab is driven through fields, the chains beating the ground and detonating bombs. MCC has also handed out thousands of shovels to replace hoes. Hoes slammed into the earth more easily detonate bombs than shovels that can be gently guided into the dirt.

After 16 years, however, these methods have cleared only about 50 hectares of land out of some 50,000 infested hectares. "We know the Laotian people will continue to discover the unexploded bombs, one by one. They don't have the means to clear their land safely and systematically. If MAG and MCC together can help develop that capacity, we feel there is no higher priority for MCC work in Laos," explains Ann Martin, MCC East Asia secretary.

News/Society

Rooftop Musings

Alyce Oosterhuis

Traces of the past

Enter any book store today to browse through the child care section and you will be struck by the array of literature on child rearing. Many of these manuals provide directions for parents to cultivate trust and security for their infants, as well as suggestions for healing the hurts caused by anxiety, severed attachments and traumatic experiences.

Since young children are sensitive to parental anxieties and fears, the implication of such advice is that parents should try to minimize their own anxiety levels.

Thoughts of trust, security and anxiety swirled to mind as we stood around the cenotaph in Edmonton on Nov. 11 to hear testimonies from dwindling numbers of war veterans. "Lest we forget," said the daily papers as they told the stories of those whose deeds are fading from public consciousness. It was while reading and listening that I realized that even when the last WW II soldier, pilot, and underground worker lies buried, we cannot forget. Because if all the child rearing manuals are correct, then for those who survived the war years as children, there must be indelible traces of anxieties and fears our parents experienced in those war years.

Defying the findings

How true is this when I apply the theories to my own family experiences? My parents' five children were born just before, during and after the war years from 1939-1948. One of us suffered the anguish of losing all in the Rotterdam bombings. Three of us endured the anxieties of food shortages and our father being absent in underground hiding. Four of us experienced the continuing rations of food and goods. All of us experienced our parents' anxieties about an impending third world war. Yet when I look at our lives, the inevitability of affected trust and anxiety levels is not confirmed. My siblings are not more distrustful or anxious than those who did not suffer the deprivations of war.

Yet when I step beyond family boundaries to look at a generation of war-born aging adults, I do see a cohort of people who have worked to assure themselves a security their parents could never attain. Not for us the hand-to-mouth existence of relying on the weekly paycheque for sustenance. We require the certainty of RRSPs, investments, clear-title homes and healthy bank accounts.

What about faith?

And when we pay homage to our war veterans for securing peace within our borders, we are grateful for our safety, homes, work and pension plans. Who knows whether the whole thrust for goods and industry, and investments and security networks would have been different in Europe and North America if there had not been a generation of anxiety-driven war infants?

One of the pillars for anxiety-release and trust-building that the manuals do not acknowledge is a faith in God. It may be that as a generation of war-birthed infants we were sheltered from parental anxieties with their prayers, their hope and their faith. Maybe Remembrance Day should be a religious rather than a national holiday. Then, above the tones of the trumpet's last call we could sing "Trust and Obey" — lest we forget.

Alyce Horzelenberg Oosterhuis is associate professor of education and psychology at The King's College in Edmonton.

Understanding depression among seniors

TORONTO (Canadian Scene) — Depressive disorders are the most common mental disorders. An estimated one in four Canadians has a degree of depression at some time in his or her life sufficient to need treatment, says a booklet published by the Ontario Ministry of Health. The booklet is also being reproduced by other provincial governments.

How does this affect the older adult?

The booklet, entitled "Understanding Depression," states that until age 65, twice as many women as men receive treatment for most depressive disorders. After 65, the gender gap narrows as more men become depressed. In retirement, men may feel lost without work as an outlet for their energies.

It is difficult to diagnose depressive disorders in the older person. Symptoms of depression may be misdiagnosed as dementia due to senility. Depression may be mistaken for the everyday problems of aging. Some drugs taken by older people can cause depression as a side effect. So can a poor diet, often a problem when elderly people live alone.

Treating depression in older people can be difficult. Even so, proper treatment can relieve suffering, renew the older person's productivity and restore his or her zest for life. "Understanding Depression" says there is no reason for any one of any age to suffer from depression.

In simple language, the booklet defines the various forms depression can take, outlines the methods of treatment and provides much other useful information.

The booklet is currently published in English and French. Free copies may be obtained by writing to: Health Information Centre, Ontario Ministry of Health, 8th Floor, Hepburn Block, Toronto, ON M7A 1S2.

Ministry officials say they will consider publishing "Understanding Depression" in other languages if there is sufficient need. They will become feedback from organizations representing ethnocultural groups.

Calvin College observes 'World Hunger Week'

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. (Calvin College) — Each minute of the day 27 children around the world die of starvation. That bleak reality was symbolically represented on the Calvin College campus Nov. 8-14 as part of the college's activities for "World Hunger Week."

During that week Calvin's commons (a large expanse of grass in the middle of the campus) was filled with small, roughly made crosses which represented the number of children who die of hunger or malnutrition every 60 seconds — about the amount of time it takes students to walk from one class to another.

That stark visual representation was one of a number of elements used to draw attention to world hunger.

On Monday a special prayer service was held. On Tuesday the evening meal consisted of a choice between the usual overabundant fare to which most North Americans are accustomed and the simple rice and water that so many people worldwide eat for every meal. Students were encouraged to have rice and water.

On Wednesday night many students began a 24-hour fast. During the fast, an all-campus Koinonia (Christian fellowship) focused on world hunger through prayer and song.

On Thursday the fast continued through the day and concluded with an evening "break-the-fast" supper. A Friday morning chapel service featured a hymn sing. The week's activities concluded Sunday with a related worship service and an offering for the Christian World Relief Committee. CRWRC both provides the poor with food and teaches new ways to raise crops.

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Media /Music

Michael Jackson and Madonna concerts spark debates on morality and censorship

MEXICO CITY, Mexico (EP) — First-time performances in Mexico by pop stars Madonna and Michael Jackson have sparked a national debate on morality and censorship in the traditionally Roman Catholic country among religious leaders, politicians and teenage fans.

Madonna's performances, which often feature sexually provocative dancing and costumes, have been criticized because of her use of symbols that parody or insult religion.

"She makes a joke of religious values," says Francisco Gonzales of Mexico's Union of Parents and Families. "Her concerts are immoral."

Jackson has also taken heat for his performances, which include dancing during which he grabs at his genitals. In addition, he faces allegations of child sexual molestation when he returns to the United States from his extended world tour.

According to a Baptist Press report, the two stars are receiving criticism from adult conservatives, but Mexican youth, including Christian young people, continue to be eager to see both singers.

"There's a gap between parents and young people — a gap parents don't understand," observes Basilio Fierro, who works with Mexican students. "Perhaps the kids are looking for love and acceptance they don't find in the family and are looking for it somewhere else. So they turn to their peers where they can relate and where they feel accepted — and this includes Christians."

Fierro said that some of the young people in Jalapa, where he works, wanted to attend Jackson's concerts because they like his performances. But Madonna "is a different story," he added. "She promotes illicit sex, drugs, ridicule of the Bible and Satanism in her music."

On her current tour, Madonna has also sparked controversy in Israel, where Orthodox Jews were outraged by her appearance, and in Puerto Rico, where some were offended by her use of Puerto Rico's flag as a sex toy on stage during an Oct. 26 concert. In Rio de Janeiro, courts prohibited her from using the Brazilian flag in her performances. Catholic leaders in Rio condemned the pop star's excessive eroticism and urged Catholics to avoid the "malevolent" spectacle.

Dordt profs write on diverse subjects

Eerdman's to publish Schaap's WWII narrative

Marian Van Til

SIOUX CENTER, Iowa — The wartime experiences of a Dutch immigrant will be published by the William B. Eerdmans company thanks to James Schaap, a prolific short story writer and English professor at Dordt College in Sioux Center, Iowa, reports the college.

When Diet Eman (formerly Erlich) came to Sioux Center several years ago to talk about her World War Two experiences in the Netherlands, Schaap became interested in her story. His writings often draw on real people and incidents, particularly those of Dutch-Americans. When Schaap took a sabbatical from teaching in 1992 he devoted himself to writing full-time, much of his energy going into portraying the part of Eman's life which included resisting the Nazis and hiding Jewish fugitives.

Schaap uses some of Eman's actual diary accounts and a first-person narrative to make the story immediate and compelling. The book, to be called *Such Small Things, Such Ordinary People: The Diet Eman Story,* will be published by Eerdmans in June 1994. (A serialized version is currently running in *The Banner,* weekly publication of the Christian Reformed Church.)

Maatman analyzes evolutionary theory

The Dordt College Press has published the latest work by a former faculty colleague of Schaap's, Russell Maatman, a long-time chemistry professor now retired. Maatman's new book, called *The Impact of Revolutionary Theory: A Christian View,* "explores the influence of evolutionary thinking on a wide range of subjects from psychology to art, including the animal rights and unisex movements," says a college spokesperson.

In his preface Maatman explains, "Often the debate on creation and evolution centres on only one aspect of the question. I am certainly not the first person to bring several aspects of the creation-and-evolution question into a single discussion. Yet it seemed to me ... that those aspects needed to be brought together by one who is committed to the Reformed Christian perspective that no single aspect of this large question be isolated: life is of one piece."

Maatman's first intent was "to discover if and to what extent evolutionary assumptions have influenced the various academic disciplines," and then to look at how a Reformed worldview helps reveal — and correct — the impact of evolutionary thought on modern life.

'Exciting' composer's first opera debuted

OTTAWA (Canadian Scene) — The chilling world of vampires is the theme of *Nosferatu,* an opera to be presented by the Canadian Opera Company (COC) at Toronto's Du Maurier Theatre on Dec.8, 10 and 12.

Nosferatu (an alternative for the legendary Count Dracula) is the fourth Canadian opera to be presented in the COC's 43-year history. Its composer, Winnipeg-born Randolph Peters, at 33, already has a solid background in musical composition. He has composed and conducted concert music for film, radio and television productions. He is described by his teacher of composition at Indiana University, the American composer John Eaton, as "the most exciting and gifted student I have ever taught."

The opera, Peters' first, is based on an idea by Toronto writer Tom Sokolowski. It is more than retelling of the old Dracula horror story and deals with the conflict between the vampire Nosferatu/Dracula and his non-vampire daughter, Camilla. Responsible for the ultimate destruction of her father, Camilla must accept the risks and responsibilities of her action.

Highly acclaimed at Scotland's Edinburgh Festival this summer, for its innovative productions of Bartok's *Bluebeard's Castle* and Schoenberg's *Erwartung,* the COC has in its 1993-94 season already presented Bizet's *Carmen* and Mozart's *Marriage of Figaro* and *Magic Flute,* the latter in contemporary costume. In 1994, COC will present Rossini's *Le Comte Ory,* Puccini's *Madama Butterfly* and Verdi's *La Traviata.*

Hollands of Engels

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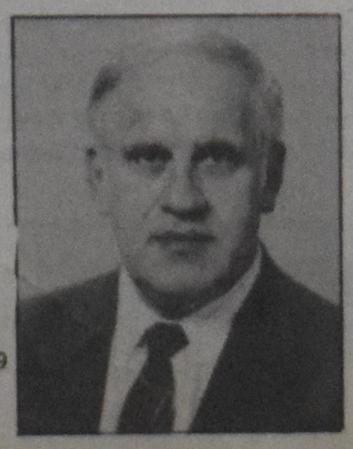

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Church, Marian Van Til, page editor

U.S. Senate overwhelmingly passes Religious Freedom Restoration Act

WASHINGTON, (EP) — After a three-year battle, the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA) cleared its final hurdle, passing the U.S. Senate at the end of last month by a 97-3 vote.

The U.S. House of Representatives passed the bill by a voice vote in May. President Bill Clinton has said he will sign the bill.

"All defenders of religious liberty should be delighted at the passage of RFRA," says Richard Land, executive director of the Southern Baptist Convention's Christian Life Commission. "When President Clinton signs RFRA, we will have substantially rectified the terrible damage done to our First Amendment religious freedom inflicted by the infamous *Smith* decision. The passage of this bill shows that Americans still cherish and are ready to defend vigorously their constitutional freedom of religion."

The bill was drafted in response to the U.S. Supreme Court's 1990 *Employment Division v. Smith* opinion, in which the court ruled that government need not demonstrate a "compelling interest" before restricting the free exercise of religion. The decision made it easier for the government to limit religious expression.

The bill was backed by an unusually broad coalition which included conservative groups, such as Concerned Women for America, the National Association of Evangelicals and the Traditional Values Coalition, and liberal groups, including the National Council of Churches, Americans for Democratic Action, American Civil Liberties Union and People for the American Way.

The RFRA is intended to restore the right to free exercise of religion to the status it enjoyed before Smith. It will require any government body to show that a policy which restricts religious liberty serves a "compelling interest" and is the "least restrictive means" of fulfilling the government's interest.

Religious pilgrimages in Europe on the rise

LOURDES, France (EP) — On an average day in Lourdes, France, 20,000 people visit Europe's most popular Roman Catholic shrine. Visitors chant, pray, carry their sick and purchase candles to burn to saints, all part of a growing movement toward religious pilgrimages in Europe.

The trend reverses popular assumptions that religious interest is fading in secularized Europe. While church attendance has declined sharply in Europe, shrines across the continent have seen phenomenal growth in number of visitors.

At Lourdes, the reported site of an apparition of the Virgin Mary in 1858, a record 5.5 million visitors paid tribute in the last year.

Priests, in efforts to explain the large numbers of people visiting shrines, attribute the phenomenon to a variety of things. The Rev. Michel de Roton, rector of the sanctuary at Lourdes, told the *New York Times*, "Pilgrimages are definitely growing. They seem to fulfil a need of the soul." Some leaders have suggested that the pilgrimages may be nostalgia from a less confusing past; others attribute it to easier travel throughout Europe. Still others suggest it may mean that a religious revival has begun in Europe.

De Roton suggested that perhaps Catholics, after several decades of turning their backs on formal practices within the church, may be searching for spiritual roots. "Perhaps people find religious life too monotonous and want something more intense, more festive, more emotional. Perhaps the form our religion has taken today does not respond to people's needs."

FROM COAST TO COAST

ENGLISH RADIO:

BRITISH COLUMBIA

Abbotsford-CFVR	7:30am	850
Burns Lake-CFLD	9:15am	1400
Kitimat-CKTK	8:30am	1230
Osoyoos-CKOO	8:30am	1490
Penticton-CKOK	8:30am	800
Port Alberni-CJAV	10:30am	1240
Prince George-CIRX	7:00am	
Prince George-CIBC	8:30am	94.3
Princeton-CKRP	8:30am	1460
Smithers-CFBV	9:15am	1230
Summerland-CKSP	8:30am	1450
Vancouver-CJVB	9:00am	1470
Vancouver-(fm)	9:00am	103.3
Vernon-CJIB	9:30pm	940

ALBERTA

Brooks-CKBR	8:00am	1340
Edmonton-CHMG	7:00am	1070
Edmonton-CHQT	7:30am	880
Edson-CJYR	10:00am	970
Ft. McMurray-CJOK	9:00am	1230
High River-CHAB	6:30am	1280
St. Albert-CHMG	7:00am	1070
Taber-CFEZ	8:00am	1570

SASKATCHEWAN

Estevan-CJSL	8:00am	1280
Weyburn-CFSL	8:00am	

MANITOBA

Altona-CFAM	9:30am	950
Steinbach-CHSM	9:30am	1250
Winnipeg-CKJS	9:15am	810

ONTARIO

Ajax-CHOO	9:30am	1390
Atikokan-CFAK	9:30am	1240
Burlington-CING (fm)	8:00am	107.9
Chatham-CFCO	9:30pm	630
Guelph-CJOY	10:00pm	1460
Hamilton-CHAM	7:30am	1280
Kapuskasing-CKAP	9:00am	580
Kingston-CFMK	10:00am	96.3
Newmarket-CKAN	8:00am	1480
Oshawa-CKAR	8:00am	1350
Owen Sound-CFOS	10:30am	560
Pembroke-CHVR	10:00am	1350
Sault Ste.Marie-CFYN	10:00am	1050
St.Catharines-CKTB	7:30pm	610
Sarnia-CHOK	7:30am	1070
Stratford-CJCS	8:45am	1240
Timmins-CKOY	9:30am	620
Windsor-CKLW	9:00am	800
Wingham-CKNX	10:30am	920
Woodstock-CKDK (fm)	8:00am	102.3

NEW BRUNSWICK

Fredericton-CFNB	6:30am	550
Newcastle-CFAN	9:00am	790
Saint John-CHSJ	9:00am	700

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

Charlottetown-CFCY	7:00am	630

QUEBEC

Montreal-CFQR (fm)	7:30am	92.5

NOVA SCOTIA

Digby-CKDY	6:00am	1420
Kentville-CKEN	8:30am	1490
Middleton-CKAD	8:30am	1350
New Glasgow-CKEC	7:30am	1320
Sydney-CJCB	8:00am	1270
Weymouth-CKDY	8:30am	1031
Windsor-CFAB	8:30am	1450

FRENCH RADIO:
Perspectives Réformées

ONTARIO

Cornwall-CFIX	9:30am	1170
Timmins-CRCL	9:30am	620

QUEBEC

Montreal-CHRS	8:00am	1090
Valleyfield-CFLV	8:45am	1370

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Nfld., N.B., N.S. & P.E.I.	8:00 & 11:00pm

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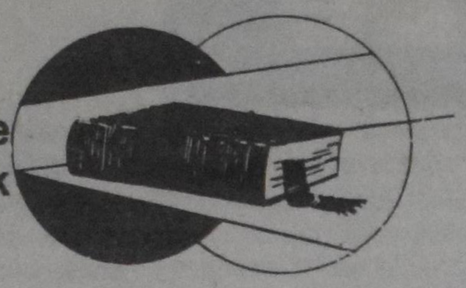
Dutch choose new name for United Church

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. (REC) — The synods of three Dutch churches have chosen a new name for their planned union: *De Verenigde Protestantse Kerk in Nederland* (The United Protestant Church in the Netherlands). Meeting in early October, delegates from the *Hervormde Kerk* (sister to the Reformed Church) the *Gereformeerde Kerken* (sister to the Christian Reformed Church) and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the Netherlands voted with a 75 per cent majority for the new name. The three churches have for some years been in a unification process called "Together on the Way."

This name replaced the previous proposal, the United Reformational Church in the Netherlands. The word *reformational* raised confusing associations in Dutch. There was strong support to call it the Evangelical Church, but there was also some strong opposition.

The combined synod also worked on the proposed church order for the new church. There was an attempt to get more confessional elements into the church order, but delegates did not agree. The Lutheran proposal that they have some special status in the new church was also not well received by the delegates. Because the Lutherans group is much smaller than the other two, Lutherans fear they will be lost in the union. In the end only six of the 19 articles of the church order were approved. The others will be debated at a later meeting.

Beginning in January 1994, the press services of the churches will begin to combine. The *Weekbulletin* of the *Hervormde Kerk* will cease. *Kerkinformatie*, the monthly magazine of the *Gereformeerde Kerk*, will also become the organ of the *Hervormde Kerk*, and possibly of the ELCN as well.



The 'Song of the Valiant Woman' (V)

"She watches over [Hebrew: *sopiyya*] *the affairs of her household and does not eat the bread of idleness* (Prov. 31: 27, NIV).

The Valiant Woman who is described in the final chapter of the book of Proverbs is no slouch — and she makes sure that those working under her are no slouches either. She keeps a sharp eye on all the "ways" or "goings-on" (that's how we could translate the Hebrew original here) of the establishment which she runs, and she herself does not "eat the bread of idleness" — an idiomatic way of saying that she is not idle. Actually, the second line of this verse is ambiguous in the original; it could also be translated "idleness does not eat bread," meaning that those who are idle will not earn their keep.

But there is another point in the Hebrew which cannot be conveyed in a translation. The words "she watches over" translates the single Hebrew word *sopiyya*, a particular form of the verb meaning "watch over." But there are two things that are unusual about this word: it is not only a participle (unlike all the other verbs describing the activities of the Valiant Woman), but it is an unusual form of the participle. It is as though, after saying in previous verses that the woman "brings," "selects," "gets up," and "sees," the poet now says in verse 27: "a-watching she is." What can be the meaning of this abrupt switch in the verbal form?

A bilingual pun

Part of the answer is that the use of isolated participles like this is a feature of the style of biblical *hymns*, that is, songs of praise. I hope to show in a later column that this is part of a larger pattern of hymnic features in the Song of the Valiant Woman. However, although the hymnic style may account for the use of a participle, it still doesn't explain why the poet deliberately chose an unusual form of the participle: *sopiyya* instead of the regular *sopa* (comparable in English to using "a-watching" instead of the regular "watching"). Why do such a strange thing?

I believe the answer is that the poet is making a clever word play — a word play which works only if he (or she) used the unusual form *sopiyya*. As it happens, the Hebrew verb *sopiyya* would have been pronounced in the same way as the Greek word *sophia*, which means "wisdom." Consequently, the first line of our verse, like the second, is probably deliberately ambiguous.

It can mean either "She watches over the ways of her household" or "*Sophia* [are] the ways of her household," that is, all the activities of her household exemplify wisdom. The second meaning also fits well with the rest of the poem.

If I am right about this bilingual word play, then the Song of the Valiant Woman must have been written when the Greek language and Greek culture were beginning to make a significant impact on the Jews. In that case, part of the point of this poem is that practical, down-to-earth, God-fearing wisdom — the kind exemplified by the Valiant Woman — is the biblical alternative to the Greek ideal of wisdom as autonomous rationality.

Al Wolters teaches Bible and Greek at Redeemer College, Ancaster, Ont.

New Lutheran sexuality report endorses monogamous homosexuality

CHICAGO, Ill. (EP) — Human sexuality should be expressed only in loving, committed relationships — but not necessarily limited to heterosexual marriages, according to a report released by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). The 21-page report, a first draft of a proposed social statement for the church, endorses homosexuality and suggests that marriage, though desirable, is optional for committed couples.

The report presents the perspective of "those of us who are gay or lesbian Christians" and calls on the church to "challenge stereotypes" of gays and lesbians, and to challenge the idea that all homosexual activity is contrary to God's law.

Biblical passages condemning homosexuality are addressed in the report, which deals with them either by arguing that they refer only to abusive homosexual activity, or saying they fail to take into account the modern concept of an immutable "sexual orientation."

What is 'binding commitment'?

Recognition of committed couples who live together without the benefit of marriage is urged. "It is the binding commitment, not the license or ceremony, that lies at the heart of biblical understandings of marriage," says the report. "In those circumstances where a legal marriage is not feasible, communities of faith may need to consider other ways of publicly affirming and communally supporting a loving, binding commitment between two people."

The report commits the church to support gay rights, opposes pornography, presents masturbation as something that is "generally appropriate and healthy," and sees sex education, including information on condom use, as a moral imperative.

The report, sent to 19,000 pastors and church leaders in late October, has drawn sharp criticism from the conservative wing of the 5.2 million-member denomination.

The Rev. Thomas Parrish, president of the Great Commission Network, an organization of conservative Lutheran pastors, condemned the report's "sloppy exegesis." He said, "In the name of grace and understanding, this task force is not being biblical. They need a basic course in Bible study."

German congregation requests one service monthly

HAMBURG, Germ. (REC) — In the Altona district of Hamburg, Germany, a local congregation of 4,000 members has an average attendance of only 20 persons each Sunday. The two pastors are proposing that the church have only one service per month. They hope to increase participation with this tactic. They point to their Sunday School, which has increased attendance after dropping to a single, monthly meeting. They hope to have more participation by the congregation and to move away from the traditional liturgy toward a discussion hour.

The proposal must be approved by the higher church leadership. Bishop Maria Jepsen of Hamburg disagreed with the proposal. "I cannot imagine a Sunday without a blessing," she said. Services are not performances for a pastor but a strengthening for the people, she insisted, and expressed regret at the focus on numbers. She said she had led services with only five or six present.

Famous atheist admits defeat

AUSTIN, Tex. (EP) — Atheist leader Madalyn Murray O'Hair told the *Austin American-Statesman* that she believes she is losing her battle to keep religion out of American public life. She expressed concern about the June "March for Jesus" which attracted over 20,000 people in Austin, where her atheist organization is based. "They have 20,000 out in the street, whereas when [atheists] were here for the convention , we got 300 or 400 out in the street in Austin — you can't have that."

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Peter's choice

Paul Spoelstra

Brick. Mortar. Brick. Mortar. Brick. Mortar. Brick. Mortar. Peter scanned the finishing course of his masonry, tucked neatly under the eaves.

He felt pleasantly tired. The silence at the end of the workday was sweet. Moreover, he was about to be paid. He collected his trowels, pointers and chisels, tossed them into a bucket and turned to follow Rocco's progress towards him.

"Nice job, Peter. You want cheque or cash?" Rocco asked.

"Are you crazy, Rocky? $4,000 in cash? Nobody keeps that kind of cash around!"

He occasionally accepted cash for little jobs — Saturday work — a fireplace here, a garden wall there, some tuckpointing, whatever — without a second thought. Everyone works for cash once in a while, and there's nothing wrong with it.

"You do good work. You my friend. I give you cheque or cash. What's it gonna be?"

Good question. First big job in two months. Construction dead all winter long. Last year's taxes unpaid.

"Tell you what," Rocco continued "I got a little something I want you to try. I make lots of the wine this winter."

From the folds of a faded plaid coat lying in a heap near the front porch Rocco produced a long green bottle and two Tim Horton cups. He poured the wine. Peter took a gulp and its tart flavour hit him like a brick.

Rocco reached into the jacket again. "You want *salsicc*... sausage too? Me and mama make sausage too. Little pork, little garlic, little odds and ends. You try."

Cash. Cash to a bricklayer in the springtime is like a bucket of cold beer to a man stranded in the desert.

"I got hooks in the fruit cellar. You see them? Special for my *salsicc*. Hang from hooks, get nice and dry. When my house finish you come I give you one."

Everyone knows that the government figures on small tradespeople taking cash now and again, so they get us in other ways. And the way the government burns up money, it's probably better for the economy to hang on to whatever cash you can.

"Hey, Peter, why we no sit down?"

Rocco spied a piece of 2x6 in the clay, flipped it once to check for nails and laid it across some ashlars piled near the house. They sat, leaned back on the porch and gazed into the dreary expanse of subdivision. Peter loosened the laces of his safety boots, kicked them off and rested his heels on the uppers. His feet all but sighed.

"You try my sausage. You no can buy like this."

With a short, white-handled knife Rocco began cutting off pieces of the sausage, pressing them between his thumb and the blade and lifting them to his mouth. Now he offered a hunk to Peter.

"*Grazie*, Rocky."

If it hadn't been for the wine he would have refused the offering. He ate it gratefully, however, after the first taste.

If it hadn't been for the wine he would have refused the offering. He ate it gratefully, however, afer the first taste.

"So Rocky, what kind of year we are going to have?"

"Pietro, I tell you, we gonna get there, no matter what. Lots of money — little money; no matter. We gonna get there."

"The Man Upstairs," he continued, poking upwards the remnants of an index finger which had learned how pitiless a table saw can be, "the Man Upstairs, he looks after us, no matter what."

"You're right, Rocco. I'm glad to hear you say that. Are you a Christian?"

"I'm a Catholic. Hey, I'm Italiano. All Italiano Catholics. I go to mass, but not all the time. Sometimes the priest he call me up and say, 'Rocco, *Come va?* I no see you for long time. What's the matter? You no like me?' Then I go to make him happy. You go to reform church, Peter? I know you very serious people, you Dutch."

"It's not a Dutch church, Rocco. The Catholic Church isn't an Italian church or an Irish church, is it? Besides, I was born here."

"Pietro, tell me, where you learn to do the brick?"

"Do you know Mario Angeleone? I learned from him. When I finished school I started mixing mortar and setting up scaffolds for him. It was two years before he let me touch a trowel, and even then I had to make sure I was ahead of all my other work.

"Finally one day Mario's son came to work to help with the mortar on a big job we had, and Mario let me spend some time on a block partition in a basement. When I finished it he walked over, looked at it, lifted up his foot, and kicked it over. 'No good,' he said.

"I was so humiliated I quit then and there, but he called me up in a few days and said, 'You try again. I know you do better.' After that he let me lay bricks steady. He never really taught me. He would always say, 'Watch-a, watch-a. Every brick you lay, watch-a. Make nice. Every course you lay, watch-a. You watch-a everything. Then when you finish, the whole job look-a beautiful.'

"Mario taught me the rhythm of the work, if you know what I mean. When it got to the point where he let me look after chimneys and fireplaces, I knew I was ready to go on my own. He didn't mind when I left him, either. He even helped me to get a start."

Rocco pointed upward again. "Mario upstairs now. Lay bricks in heaven now."

Two boys wearing Bulls jackets, Raiders caps and Nike shoes approached them from the sidewalk, picking their way through the construction debris. One had a boom box on his shoulders, carrying it like carpenters used to carry tool boxes in the old days. As they came nearer, strains of a song could be heard, something about someone being too sexy for his car. The other boy hollered over the music, "Hey mister, you got any pop bottles or beer bottles we could have?"

"In the basement," Rocco responded. "You take 'em all, if you want. Hey, you not the kids who break my window with rock, are you? You know who did it?"

Wide-eyed, they denied the charge. "My old man would kill me if I did something like that," one boy said.

"That's good. You got a good papa. You get the bottles. But if you see anyone around here not supposed to be, you tell me, OK?"

Rocco turned to Peter again, the depleted green bottle in his hand. "Little more wine, Peter?"

"Just a half a cup, Rocco. I've got to drive home, you know." Peter was pleased with

his restraint. Sometimes when you lay brick all day you begin to feel like one. When the mortar bags get slammed down on the grate over the mixer, the dust flies up in the wind and gets in your mouth and nose and eyes; your hands get covered with grit and flecks of clay and a film of dust and sweat covers your body. A little wine makes you feel human again. Even so, a half cup would be enough to wash down the lingering traces of cement and sausage. Any more, and he might become a hazard on the road.

Rocco thumped the cork into the bottle and returned the bottle to its nesting place within his coat. "I know Mario from long time ago. His wife my wife cousin. Good man. Go to mass every week, not like me. I know him in old country, too. His parents die both before he five year old, and he got nobody then. Every Italian family so big it make you crazy, but Mario got nobody in the world. He come to Canada work in the tobacco for a while in Simcoe, then he start on the brick. He do really good. He get a nice house with big arches and a big family too; but he never forget to go to mass. He go to confession regular, too, and I know him — he never do one thing wrong in his life.

"He got good kids, too," Rocco continued. "His daughter little strange though. She, how you say, chari..., charim...."

"Charismatic?"

"Yeah, she charismatic. Every six month she give all her clothes to Haiti. Everything! Spend all her money on Haiti people. She not like normal people. His boy, Vito, he very smart. He Jesuit. You know Jesuits very smart people, Peter. He...."

"Not Vito!" Peter interrupted. "Vito used to help us on Saturdays. He seemed like such a happy-go-lucky kid — and now he's a Jesuit?"

"Right, Pietro. Vito very smart, not like you and me."

"Speak for yourself."

"I forget. You very smart man. Good bricklayer."

"Rocky, it sounds like Mario's name was written in the book of life."

"Rocky, it sounds like Mario's name was written in the book of life."

"What book?"

"Oh, never mind."

The supper hour was now passed and the thin strips of sunlight wedged between the houses were cool and dim, as if the solar fires had been turned low for the evening. Peter reached for his boots, turned them over and whacked them against the side of the porch, clearing out the chips and stones which had crawled in during the day. He slipped them on now (awakening the blisters on his toes) and laced them up.

"So what do you want, Pietro, cheque or cash?"

They had forgotten the two lads who had come for bottles, and were thus mildly surprised when they emerged from the house, one with the boom box and the other with a pyramid of bottles cradled in the crooks of his arms. "Hey, mister," the talkative one said, "Thanks a lot for the bottles."

"OK, boys. Don't forget. Anybody touch my house, you tell me." The boys promised, and strode off down the sidewalk. When they turned the corner of the block there was an outburst of laughter.

Rocco sighed. "Why they bother? They get $3.00 for those bottles, go to mall, play the video games and *phtt*, money gone."

"Here, I get the money."

Cheque or cash. Cheque. Take it to the bank. Pay the taxes. Render to Caesar....

Rocco flipped his jacket over, loosened a pocket button, pulled out a fist-sized wad of money and peeled off four one-thousand dollar bills.

Peter took the bills and stuffed them deep into the pocket of his Levi's.

"Thanks, Rocco. I've got to go now. *Ciao*, eh?" They shook hands. Peter picked up his bucket of tools, climbed into his truck and eased out of the subdivision, mindful of the mixer he was towing. Flowers, he thought. How long has it been since I bought my wife flowers?

The two lads in the Chicago Bulls jackets were waiting at the crosswalk when he stopped for a red light. He didn't notice them, but they heard him through his rolled-down window whistling a melody that is sometimes called the Welsh Hymn. The light changed and he moved into the intersection, signalling in the direction of the flower shop. The boys crossed the street behind him, headed for the mall.

Paul Spoelstra is a carpenter living in Hamilton, Ont.

Littlest angel

Bertha Hosmar

It was very quiet in the lounge of one of our local nursing homes that afternoon in March. It seemed that the harsh winter of 1992-1993 would never end. We had just weathered yet another snowstorm, and a grey sky, icy cold winds and drifting snow did nothing to lift one's spirits. Many residents had not left the building for several weeks; some hadn't left in months. Now several residents were seated on sofas or in wheelchairs, watching television or just dozing. Nobody said a word.

This particular afternoon I took the perfect cure for the winter blahs with me. I was babysitting our youngest grandson and when I had peeled off his snowsuit I plunked him in front of the sofas and wheelchairs. Then I stood back to watch discreetly what might happen.

A few heads lifted; a few smiles appeared. Sixteen-month-old Michael stood motionless. With his big blue eyes fringed by long lashes, his chubby, rosy cheeks and his sturdy two-foot-tall body he looked like Humpty-Dumpty. After about two minutes of taking it all in, Michael decided it was time to explore.

He started talking excitedly in his own language, going to the first wheelchair. After some deep thinking he decided to climb the occupant's legs. The man, who seemed to have been lost in his own world, reacted with a tremulous smile and uttered some incoherent words.

Heads turned and people started laughing. An elderly woman cuddling an oversized doll reached over and grabbed Michael's hand. "Come to grandma's house for tea and cookies," she mumbled.

Michael, enjoying the attention immensely, toddled from one person to another, exploring a purse here or a cane there. He planted wet kisses on gnarled hands, all the while jabbering happily.

Occasionally he raised a dimpled little hand, waving like royalty and uttering the only intelligent word he knew: "Hi! Hi!"

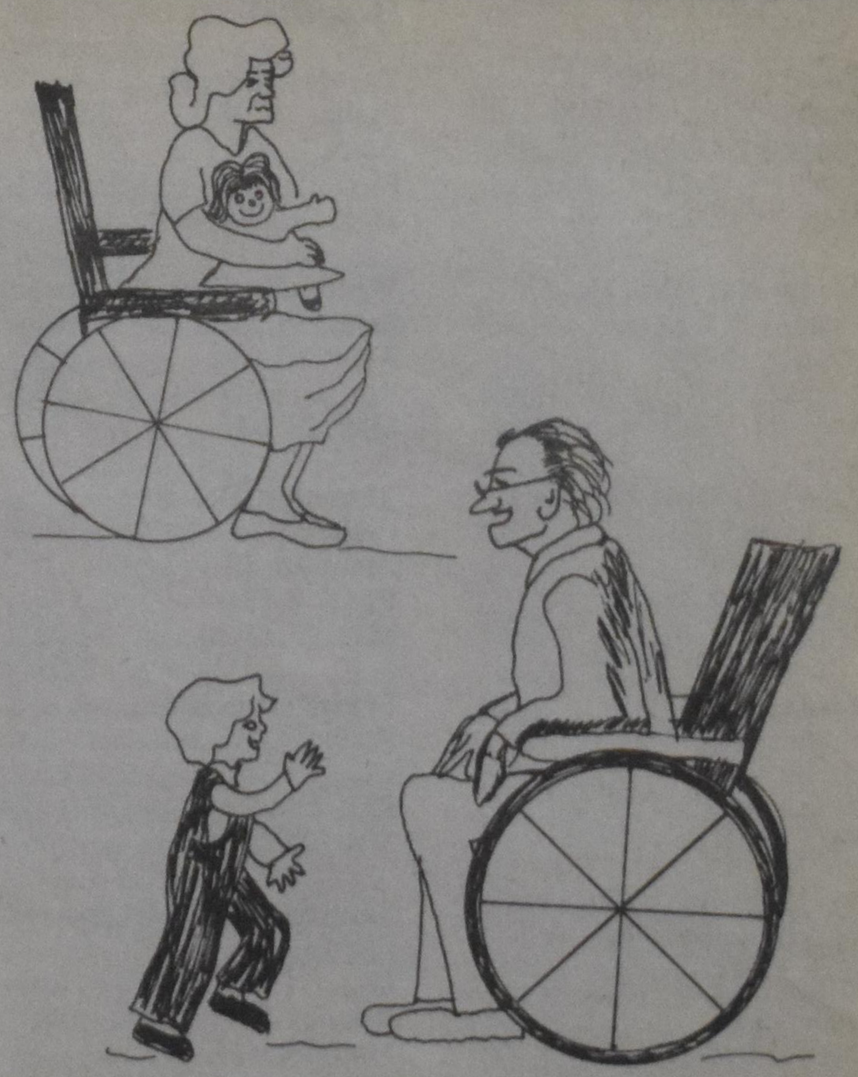
By now the lounge was no longer quiet. The atmosphere had been transformed. People were laughing and talking with one another. All eyes were on the small bundle of humanity who seemed to bring back fond memories of days gone by. A few staff members stopped to watch.

"Visitors should bring their children and grandchildren more often," said one.

"It's medicine. Young children are not afraid if some residents should behave a little oddly. Children accept such things; children bring such joy."

When it was time to go several residents in wheelchairs escorted us all the way to the front door. It looked like an honor guard. Everyone was waving and smiling at Michael.

That dark afternoon God sent some of his people a smile of encouragement by using one of their "littlest angels."



Berta Hosmar lives in Whitby, Ont.

Meditation

Scripture passages for Advent

Marian Van Til

A lectionary is a year-long, carefully chosen cycle of Scripture passages used by churches around the world — and increasingly by Reformed churches. The passages have been chosen so that by the time a two- or three-year cycle is complete, one can be sure that key passages and biblical teachings will have been covered. Lectionaries can be used both in Sunday worship and in personal devotions because they contain suggested passages for every day of the year.

There are several lectionaries in use worldwide; they differ from each other only minutely. The one used below is that currently used by the worldwide Anglican Communion, among others. It is what is known as the "daily office" lectionary, which is arranged in a two year cycle. The daily "offices" (services) come from the centuries-old Catholic monastic tradition of setting aside six times of worship *each day*. The two main offices in morning and evening, Matins (or Morning Prayer) and Vespers or Evensong, are still regularly celebrated in many places in the world by Catholics, Anglicans and Lutherans, by both laypeople and monastics.

The Advent season — the beginning of a new church year — begins four Sundays before Christmas, this year on Sunday, Nov. 28.

Below is the daily lectionary for Advent (Year 2). Advent —waiting for Christ's coming — is both a time of expectation and penitence, and the readings reflect that.

When using these passages for family devotions, say, at suppertime, readers might want to include the lighting of an Advent wreath each night and the singing of an Advent hymn or carol, choosing a new carol for each of the four weeks.

Advent I, Nov. 28-Dec. 4
Sunday (Nov. 28):
Psalms 146, 147
Amos 1:1-5, 13-2:8
1 Thess. 5:1-11
Luke 21:5-9

Monday (Nov. 29):
Psalms 1, 2, 3
Amos 2:6-16
2 Peter 1:1-11
Matt. 21:1-11

Tuesday (Nov. 30):
Psalms 5, 6
Amos 3:1-11
2 Peter 1:12-21
Matt. 21:12-22

Wednesday (Dec. 1):
Psalm 119:1-24
Amos 3:12-4:5
2 Peter 3:1-10
Matt. 21:23-32

Thursday (Dec. 2):
Psalm 18:1-20
Amos 4:6-13
2 Peter 3:11-18
Matt. 21:33-46

Friday (Dec. 3):
Psalms 16, 17
Amos 5:1-17
Jude 1-16
Matt. 22:1-14

Saturday (Dec. 4):
Psalms 20, 21:1-14
Amos 5:18-27
Jude 17-25
Matt. 22:15-22

Advent II, Dec. 5-11
Sunday (Dec. 5):
Psalms 148, 149, 150
Amos 6:1-14
2 Thess. 1:5-12
Luke 1:57-68

Monday (Dec. 6):
Psalm 25
Amos 7:1-9
Rev. 1:1-8
Matt. 22:23-33

Tuesday (Dec. 7):
Psalms 26, 28
Amos 7: 10-17
Rev. 1:9-16
Matt. 22:34-46

Wednesday (Dec. 8):
Psalm 38
Amos 8:1-14
Rev. 1:17-2:7
Matt. 23:1-12

Thursday (Dec. 9):
Psalm 37:1-18
Amos 9:1-10
Rev. 2:8-17
Matt. 23:13-26

Friday (Dec. 10):
Psalm 31
Hag. 1:1-15
Rev. 2:18-29
Matt. 23:27-39

Saturday (Dec. 11):
Psalms 30, 32
Hag. 2:1-9
Rev. 3:1-6
Matt. 24:1-14

Advent III, Dec. 12-18
Sunday (Dec. 12):
Psalms 63, 98
Amos 9:11-15
2 Thess. 2:1-17
John 5: 30-47

Monday (Dec. 13):
Psalms 41, 52
Zech.1:7-17
Rev. 3:7-13
Matt. 24:15-31

Tuesday (Dec. 14):
Psalm 45
Zech. 2:1-13
Rev. 3:14-22
Matt. 24:32-44

Wednesday (Dec. 15):
Psalm 119:49-72
Zech. 3:1-10
Rev. 4:1-8
Matt. 24:45-51

Thursday (Dec. 16):
Psalm 50
Zech. 4:1-14
Rev. 4:9-5:5
Matt. 25:1-13

Friday (Dec. 17):
Psalms 40, 54
Zech. 7:8-8:8
Rev. 5:6-14
Matt. 25:14-30

Saturday (Dec. 18):
Psalm 55
Zech. 8:9-17
Rev. 6:1-17
Matt. 25:31-46

Advent IV, Dec. 19-24
Sunday (Dec. 19):
Psalms 61, 62
Zeph. 3:14-20
Titus 1:1-16
Luke 1:1-25
Monday (Dec. 20):
Psalms 66, 67
1 Sam. 2:1-10
Titus 2:1-10
Luke 1:26-38

Tuesday (Dec. 21):
Psalm 72
2 Sam. 7:1-17
Titus 2:11-3:8a
Luke 1:39-56

Wednesday (Dec. 22):
Psalm 80
2 Sam. 7:18-29
Gal. 3:1-14
Luke 1:57-66

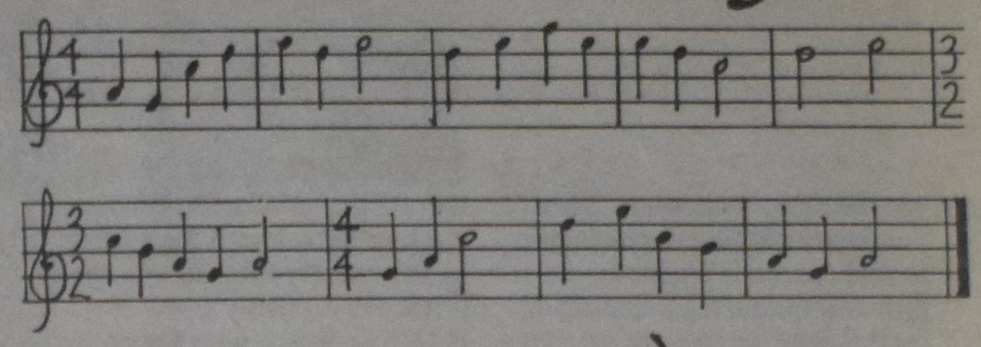
Thursday (Dec. 23):
Psalms 93, 96
Is 33: 17-22 (or Baruch 4:21-29)
Gal. 3:15-22
Luke 1:67-80; Matt. 1:1-17

Friday (Dec. 24):
Psalms 45, 46
Is. 35:1-10 (or Baruch 4:36-5:9)
Gal. 3:23-4:7
Matt. 1:18-25

Friday evening (Christmas Eve):
Psalm 89
Is. 59:15b-21
Phil. 2:5-11

Christmas Day:
Psalms 2, 85
Micah 4:1-5; 5:2-4
1 John 4:7-16
John 3:31-36

Gabriel's Message



Text and music from the *Piae Cantiones*, 1582

Gabriel's message does away
Satan's curse and Satan's sway,
Out of darkness brings our Day:
Therefore sing, Glory to the coming King.

He that comes despised shall reign;
He that cannot die, be slain;
Death by death its death shall gain:
Therefore sing, Glory to the suffering King.

Weakness shall the strong confound;
By the hands, in grave-clothes wound;
Adam's chains shall be unbound:
Therefore sing, Glory to the risen King.

By the sword that was his own,
By that sword, and that alone,
Shall Goliath be o'erthrown:
Therefore sing, Glory to the conquering King.

Art by art shall be assailed;
To the cross shall Life be nailed;
From the grave shall Hope be hailed:
Therefore sing, glory to the conquering King.

Feature

How do Christian Reformed young people share and believe?

Herb Vanderbeek

In this article Herb Vanderbeek explores the topic of intimacy as it relates to Christian Reformed young people. The material which he presents is based on a study he has just completed as an MA candidate in psychology at the University of Manitoba.

Carl and Dianne can best be described as being your typical ("average") Christian Reformed young persons. Let's just say that they are both 20 years old. They both come from stable homes and their parents most probably immigrated to Canada in either the late '40s or the early '50s. Their schooling has been within the Christian school system and they have grown up with their friends.

Being typical Christian Reformed young people they have had the usual experiences while growing up. Their relationships have matured to the point that each person in the friendship is treated as an equal and certain allowances are made for the other's personality traits or quirks. Within their friendships there is also a growing amount of mutual understanding and this allows them to share feelings, perhaps even freely and openly. As their friendships develop and deepen there is also a growing sense of intimacy.

In this regard Carl and Dianne are not that different from other young people in Canadian society. As children grow older they all begin to learn more about themselves and about others through being with their friends. As they move from childhood to adolescence and on to adulthood it is most likely that their friends will start to have a greater influence on what they do and what they think (sometimes much to their parents' dismay). This is probably due to the fact that they are spending more time with their friends than with their family.

Study based on students

Whereas the accounts of Carl and Dianne as they grew up are based on what could be called general knowledge, the following descriptions of their intimacy patterns are based upon a study I have recently completed among a group of Christian Reformed young people who attended Redeemer College and The King's College. The age of the students who participated ranged from 18 to 22.

When they were questioned about their religious beliefs, the vast majority reported that they, as well as their parents, were committed to Christianity. These students were compared to a similar group of students, in terms of age and year of study, from the University of Manitoba. These students could be considered to be representative of general society. In contrast to the Christian Reformed students, the majority of students from the university showed little or no commitment to any particular set of religious beliefs, though about a quarter of them were committed to Christianity.

In order to find out how much intimacy was experienced, I had each person answer a series of questions which looked at how often actions such as spending time, sharing information and showing affection to the other person occurred. Additionally, there were questions which looked at how the person felt about spending time with the other person, being supportive, being satisfied and how important the relationship was to the person. The person was asked to answer these questions in terms of their closest same-sex and closest opposite-sex friend.

Difference in sharing

In general terms, it was found that Christian Reformed young people shared more of themselves, and share more frequently, with their closest same-sex friend than students from general society. Also, it was found that females were more likely to share more with their closest female friend, and this was true for both the Christian Reformed and the general society groups.

When we look at Carl and Dianne separately, we see that there are differences in how they relate in terms of intimacy to their different friends. When Dianne is with her girlfriends, especially her closest girlfriend, she shares more of herself than her counterpart from general society would. Oddly enough, the reverse is true when Dianne is with a group of males. When Dianne is with the guys, maybe even with her closest male friend (who may or may not be her boyfriend), she shares less of herself than her counterpart from general society.

Carl, on the other hand, when compared to other males from general society shares more of himself when he is with his buddies, especially his closest friend. This is also true for when Carl shares himself with his female friends. What is interesting to note is that Carl tends to share more of himself with his female friends than Dianne does with her male friends.

What are the reasons?

While all this may be very interesting, the question "Why do Carl and Dianne share more of themselves?" needs to be asked. The answer is a definite "I'm not sure!" The fact that Carl and Dianne share more with their friends of the same-sex would seem to indicate that there is something present in their friendship which encourages or facilitates more sharing of the self with others.

Perhaps this is due to the fact that Carl and Dianne are members of a tight-knit social group known as the Christian Reformed Church. Within this tight-knit group there is not only a common heritage and common customs, but there are also common beliefs, values and shared activities which help support increased sharing. As well they see other members of the group on a somewhat continuous basis.

Perhaps Carl and Dianne are more willing to share of who they are because they know that their closest friend is also a Christian and in that light there is common bond which makes sharing easier, a sort of "bearing one another's burdens" (Gal. 6:2).

Does faith play a role?

As much as the "private" lives of Carl and Dianne might be interesting to look at, the question still remains and has probably been asked by you: "What about their faith and how does their faith relate to their friendships?" These are good questions, and I might have some answers.

In addition to the information I collected on how much Carl and Dianne share of themselves, I also collected information on what may be called their "religious identity." The focal point of a religious identity is whether the person has explored what his or her faith is about and whether the person has made a commitment to what his or her final decision is regarding faith.

When compared to students from the University of Manitoba, Christian Reformed students had much higher rates of committing to their faith without really exploring what that faith was about. Perhaps such statements as "The faith I was raised with is fulfilling for me, and I see no reason to deviate from it" or "I agree with the religious beliefs I was raised with, and they provide a sense of security for me" are typical attitudes of these Christian Reformed students.

These young people seem not to have asked hard questions about the faith with which they were raised. Perhaps they assume that because they have been baptized, go to church and to a Christian school, they are Christians and therefore they have no need to make Christianity real for themselves. They seem to be content to have their Christianity provide a "form of godliness without the power thereof."

A greater searching

The other real difference between Christian Reformed young people and students at the University of Manitoba was that the Carls and Diannes in the latter group were more active in exploring what their faith was all about. Statements such as "I am now looking closely and seriously at different religious beliefs and ideas so that I can decide where I stand" or "I'm giving serious thought to forming my religious beliefs and I'm digging in, trying to get answers to questions that keep coming up in my mind" characterized their searching. The Carls and Diannes in this group are not content to believe what they are told to believe; they must find out for themselves. This is not to say that they are doubting their faith, but rather that they are exploring so that they know why they believe what they believe.

Continued on page 19...

Books/Meditation

Toward a healthy and effective church

***Where's a Good Church? Canadians Respond from the Pulpit, Podium and Pew**, by Donald C. Posterski and Irwin Barker. Winfield, B.C.: Wood Lake Books, 1993, ISBN 0-929032-94-2. Softcover, 270 pp., $17.95. Reviewed by Sophie Vandenberg, Norval, Ont.*

Many committed Christians feel a degree of discontentment with their church experience. In the book *Where's a Good Church?* authors Don Posterski and Irwin Barker attempt to come to an understanding of what constitutes an effective church. The writers are careful not to equate effectiveness with church growth. Numerical growth should be a *result* of effectiveness rather than a goal. Spiritual growth should be the paramount consideration in judging effectiveness. The authors point out that what is often thought to be numerical church growth has actually proven to be "the circulation of the saints." Church goers merely move from one church to the next.

The writers acknowledge that there exist many "conditional Christians" who have a consumer approach to church. Loyalty is conditional and decisions are made on the basis of self-interest; very little is sacrificed to the common good. The writers point out that such a consumer model is limited because it applies only to those people who are marginally committed. The consumer model ignores active participants who *are* committed Christians and who have a responsibility to find a place of worship where their spiritual needs can be met.

Posterski and Barker base their conclusions on a study of committed church goers from both mainline and evangelical churches. Their survey sample was of "loyal church customers," not "convenience shoppers."

Orthodoxy, community, relevance, outreach

Survey results indicated that the four cornerstones of an effective church are orthodoxy, community, relevance and outreach. A balance of these four elements is critical, however. The authors indicate that any church that puts too heavy an emphasis on one of the cornerstones runs the risk of becoming unhealthy.

For example, those churches that overemphasize doctrinal orthodoxy run the risk of becoming "holy islands." Severed from involvement in the world, such churches are not easily able to render relevant service to the world. Likewise, overemphasis on either community, relevance, or outreach can create distortions in the church.

Posterski and Barker indicate that if current trends continue, the church in Canada is headed for decline. If the church hopes to survive it can not afford to take a "business as usual" approach. The writers affirm that the church must remain faithful to its central purpose of helping people work out their lives with God, while also being in tune with the rapid changes all around it. They point out in these words of John Stott: "Transposing the message of the gospel culturally does not change its message, just as transposing music does not change the melody and harmony and essence of a musical composition."

There are many ways in which a healthy church can obey the two great commandments of "making disciples" and "loving God and your neighbor."

This book will prove to be an informative and useful tool for all who want to uncover the strengths and weaknesses of their church as they work toward building one which is healthy and effective.

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Friends of God

Wayne Brouwer

In two minds

"When he asks, he must believe and not doubt, because he who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. That man should not think he will receive anything from the Lord: he is a double-minded man, unstable in all he does." (James 1:6-8).

In Cecil Beaton's short story "The Settee," Violet and Dorothy prowl an antique shop and find a settee, one of those long, wooden bench seats in the French style. Dorothy thinks it is Louis-Seize, and therefore extremely expensive. When she finds she can get it for a very cheap price, she convinces Violet to allow her to buy it for her.

The value of the piece weighs heavily upon Dorothy and she begins to dream of ways to get it rightfully back for herself. Informing another friend, Colonel Coddington, about her obsession, Dorothy urges him to find a way to view it and then help her trick Violet into surrendering custody.

After he has seen it, however, Colonel Coddington declares that it's merely a cheap copy of the famous Louis-Seize style and certainly not valuable at all. Dorothy's greed and obsession deflate rapidly.

The next day she laughingly relates the whole tale to George. Then the tables are turned again, as George informs Dorothy that the Colonel is a fake and doesn't know quality from imitation! In fact, says George, the settee is indeed a rare antique and very valuable! After all, he himself owns the antique shop where one like it sits in the window!

Immediately obsessive greed surges anew in Dorothy's breast.

Inner turmoil

There Beaton ends the story, allowing the mood swings of Dorothy's heart to rip her apart. She's the epitome of a "double-minded" person of the kind James describes: thinking this and believing that at the same time.

Obviously, in Beaton's tale, a remedy might readily be found. Contract the services of a bona fide antique appraiser and soon you'd be able to sort truth from fantasy. Not so the deeper doubt James talks about. It operates in a fashion similar to Dorothy's devious dualism. However, there is no bona fide appraiser of religious groundings that can sift *truth* from *lie* and pin faith securely to the mast of heaven's sail.

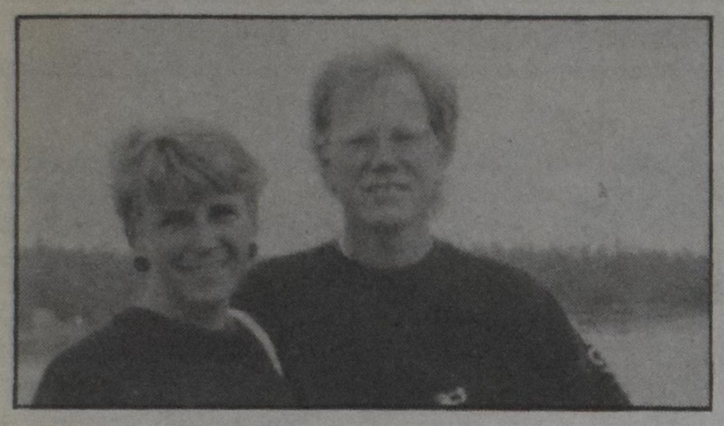
The seas still roll and the pounding waves beg their share of the soul's cargo. And those of us who have experienced significant doubts in the uncharted waters of our journeys find these verses of James' letter harsh and intimidating.

When the absence of God shouts louder than his presence, few who feel faith can escape the winds of doubts. Fortunately, these verses are not all James has to say on the subject. There will come moments of brilliance and insight further along in his letter of encouragement. And maybe the harshness of his judgment here will challenge even those winter spirits to take a second look at their perennial insecurities of faith.

Still, the best that comes from James' descriptive wisdom about faith and doubt here is the intensity of the emotional toll wreaked on hearts that waffle indecisively between trust and despair. Fortunately the One who stilled the storms on the Sea of Galilee is able yet to tame the troubling tides for those who cry out in winter's night.

Wayne Brouwer is a pastor at First Christian Reformed Church in London, Ont.

Advice/Comment



Peter and Marja are IN

Dear P & M:

We have always been told that if a Christian dies today he or she goes to heaven today. That must mean that others go to hell immediately. At the day of resurrection the ones in heaven and hell have to come back again. How does all of this work?

Dear Bound for Glory:

Have you recently had an encounter with Jehovah's Witnesses? This question is very similar to one we handled on Sept. 24 when a reader wrote to ask about the Witnesses' belief that death is a state of unconsciousness until the resurrection.

In that column we highlighted the fact that Paul referred to the Christian's death as "falling asleep in Christ" (1 Cor. 15:18, 20, 51; 1 Thess. 4:13-15). This helpful metaphor for death is readily understandable to us. It suggests that a person who dies enters a timeless state, like sleep, from which he or she awakes immediately at the judgment. When Jesus promised the thief on the cross that he would be in paradise "today," Jesus was speaking as the Son of God for whom a day is like a thousand years, and vice versa. It makes sense to us that the Lord would use language that this criminal could understand. Words like "today" and "sleep" are human words that the Bible employs for our benefit. We suspect that they barely describe God's experience of life, heaven, time and eternity.

Revelation 20 is also helpful, although we should remember that here we are dealing in visionary language. This chapter pictures the sea, death and hades as giving up the dead who are then "judged according to what they had done" (:13). The Bible does not tell us what these souls did until they were "given up." We are only told what happens next. Those whose names are written in the Book of Life are raised to eternal life and welcomed into the New Jerusalem. Those whose names are not written in the Book of Life are thrown, along with death and hades, into the lake of fire. This judgment is called "the second death" (Rev. 20:6; 21:8), a metaphor that tells us about God's intent to completely eradicate sin and evil.

While many people picture hell as a place of eternal torment, we understand from these two chapters that God will actually annihilate its inhabitants, as well as hell itself. At least, we can't imagine Satan and hades surviving this second death in the fiery lake of burning sulphur. Somehow we sense that there is something profoundly merciful about this second death.

Mind you, the best we can do is speculate a little with you about how these things will work. We still have to contend with the fact that Enoch and Elijah were taken straight to heaven without dying first. Then there's the story of Moses and Elijah appearing with Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration 2,000 years ago by the way we experience time. Hebrews 11 and 12 tell us that we are surrounded by a cloud of witnesses who cheer us on as we run the good race.

And finally, Jesus said that all God's children, living or dead, are alive to the Lord (Luke 20:38). All of these passages, including the parable about the rich man and Lazarus, suggest that there is, after all, a very real consciousness of life between our first death and the final day of judgment.

Enough speculation. The Lord is probably shaking his head at our ineptitude as human beings. We can barely figure out the way things work on earth; how can we hope to understand how it will all go as we move from death to heaven, to the day of judgment and to the New Earth!

There's just one thing we can know for sure. If you are living in the Lord now you will move smoothly into eternal life. If you're not, you will want to make a life-and-death decision that will take away not only your fear of dying, but even your need to know exactly how things will go.

One last observation: we suspect that people's pictures of the after-life and heaven and hell are shaped more by allegorical works like Dante's *Divine Comedy* and William Blake's symbolic poems and engravings than by the actual teachings of Scripture. It is always surprising to discover the difference between things we thought the Bible taught and the things it actually says, especially about the last judgement.

As in this instance, the Bible sometimes gives us seemingly contradictory clues. Fortunately God knows precisely how it all works; and one day we will, too.

Write to: P & M
c/o Christian Courier
4-261 Martindale Road
St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1

Peter and Marja Slofstra are a pastor and wife team living in St. Catharines, Ont. They are assisted by an advisory panel consisting of Herman de Jong, Bill Lidkea, Tom Zeyl, Irene Bom, Marian Van Til and Bert Witvoet.

The musical ride: a Canadian tradition

If you've ever seen a Musical Ride by the Royal Mounted Police you'll never forget it.

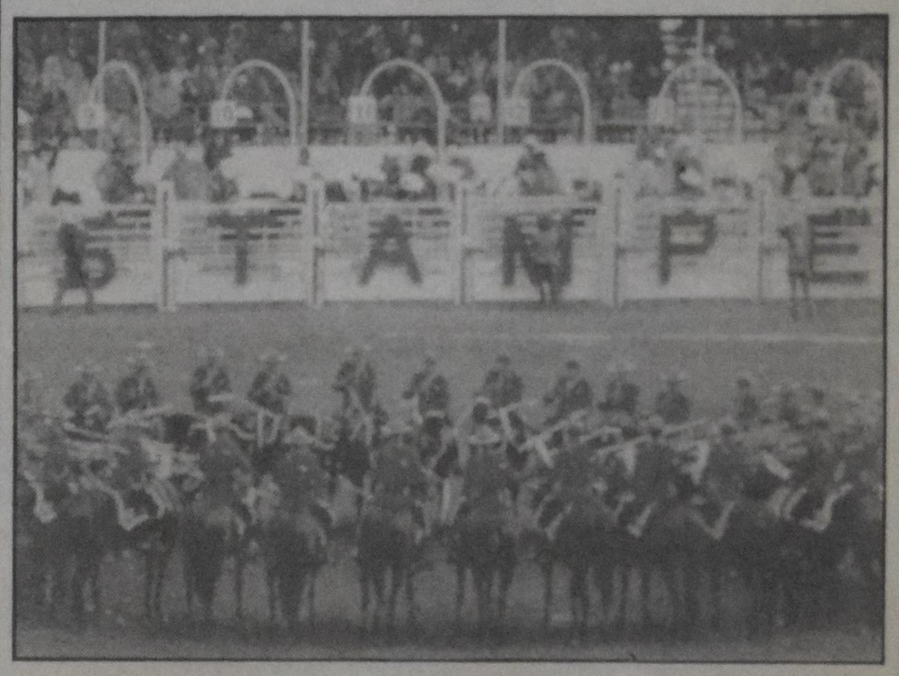


PHOTO: THE CANADIAN ENCYLOPEDIA

RCMP Musical ride.

Alayne Edwards

(Canadian Scene) — The sunlight glints on the sleek bodies of the hard-working horses. Turf flies behind their pounding hooves and the riders sit steadily in their saddles as their mounts gallop through the world famous "Charge." If you've ever seen a Musical Ride by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) you'll never forget it.

The ride has an interesting history. It grew out of a pastime that the "Mounties" developed to amuse themselves and the communities in which they were stationed.

The first known riding display was performed in 1876 by a troop trained by Sergeant Major Robert Belcher. In 1904 the Musical Ride was formalized into a regular public entertainment set to music. A troop trained by Inspector Frank Church rode at fairs in Winnipeg, Brandon, Qu'Appelle and Regina.

Training for horses and humans

The RCMP Musical Ride has been performed in every Canadian province and most American states. As well, its human participants *and* horses have travelled overseas to Belgium, Bermuda, Denmark, the British Isles, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Switzerland and Japan, making this Canadian tradition world famous.

Each horse is more than three-quarters thoroughbred and stands 15.3 to 17 "hands" high (a hand measures about 10 centimetres). The horses weigh between 450 and 470 kilograms each. They are bred at Pakenham, Ont., where they start training at three years of age. At five and a half years, they begin Musical Ride training and at six begin the ride.

All riders are volunteers and must have been with the RCMP for at least two years. Riders must take care of the mounts assigned them. The horses are shoed every six weeks and are inspected by a veterinarian at least twice a year. When the ride travels, it consists of 36 riders and horses, one farrier, three non-commissioned officers and a commissioned officer in charge.

In their scarlet tunics, blue breeches, beige Stetson hats and high, polished riding boots, the members of the Musical Ride are a memorable sight. As the music plays, they guide their horses through movements like the "Bridal Arch," the "Shanghai Cross," the "Dome" and, of course, the highlight of their performance — the unforgettable "Charge."

The writer of this article, Alayne Edwards of Belcarra, B.C., is, at 11 years of age, the proud owner of a horse, and for several years has been a competitor in equestrian events.

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Note: All rates shown above are GST inclusive

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b) A sheet with information about an obituary sent by funeral homes is *not* acceptable since it leads to errors and confusion.

c) Photographs sent by fax *are not* acceptable. If you wish a photo included, send us the original.

d) *Christian Courier* will not be responsible for any errors due to handwritten or phoned-in advertisements.

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We offer a one-year subscription for only $20.00 (GST incl.) to the couples whose wedding is announced in the *Christian Courier* and to the parents of the child whose birth announcement appears in our paper. To facilitate matters, we encourage those who request the wedding or birth announcement to enclose $20.00 and the couple's correct address.

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Phone: (905) 682-8311
Fax: (905) 682-8313

Thank You

JOOSSE:

With this note, I wish to thank all who sent me cards and best wishes for my 80th birthday. Your love and thoughtfulness was so much appreciated. Special thanks to my children and grandchildren for everything you did for me Above all, I thank God for all his blessings in my life.

Jans Joosse.

Anniversaries

Assen Abbotsford
1938 December 1 1993

55th ANNIVERSARY

With grace and thanksgiving to the Lord we celebrate our parents', grandparents', and great-grandparents' 55th anniversary.

ROBERT and HILDA BRONSEMA
(nee BERGSMA)

Address: 32036 Marshall Rd., Abbotsford, BC V2T 1A4

Amsterdam Victoria, B.C.
1953 1993

"For the Lord is good and his love endures forever; His faithfulness continues through all generations" (Ps. 100:5).

With thankfulness and joy we celebrate our parents' 40th anniversary on Dec. 17, 1993.

JAN and FRANCES SPEKKERS
(nee TAMMINGA)

May He continue to bless and keep you for many more years.

With love and congratulations from your children:

Fran & John Slofstra — Victoria, B.C.
Caralee, Mike, Julia
John & Heather Spekkers — Barrie, Ont.
Lauren, Bryan
Mary Anne & Frank Riedstra — Victoria, B.C.
Natasha

Home address: 741 Miller Ave., Victoria, BC V8Z 3C8

Anniversaries

Dedemsvaart Iroquois
1933 1993

It is with great joy that we wish to celebrate with our parents, grandparents and great-grandparents,

MARTEN and KLAASJE VERBURG
(nee TIBBEN)

their 60th wedding anniversary on Dec. 1, 1993, D.V.

We praise our God for His faithfulness and care which is so evident in their lives, we thank Him for what He has given us in them. Their thankful children;

Joyce & Bert Bosman — Saskatoon, Sask.
Anne & Jerry Doppenberg — Yarrow, B.C.
Lena & Joe Vandenakerboom — Rocky Mountain House, Alta.
Nick & Jackie Verburg — Athens, Ont.
Herma & Len Verbruggen — St. Catharines, Ont.
Henk & Minnie Verburg — Belleville, Ont.
Jennie DeVries — Brampton, Ont.
Wilma & Ben Bronsema — Guelph, Ont.
Marten & Susan Verburg — Iroquois, Ont.

Also 33 grandchildren and 33 great-grandchildren.

Welcome to an open house on Dec.4, 1993, from 2-4 p.m., at the Community Chr. Ref. Church in Dixons Corners, Ont.

Best wishes only please.

Home address: P.O. Box 543, Iroquois, ON K0E 1K0

Congratulations to Arnold and Helen Winter (Elgersma) on the occasion of their 50th wedding anniversary!

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(905) 451-7886

A four-bedroom executive home for rent in **Ancaster**, Ont. Available immediately until April 30, 1994. Very reasonable rent.

Call (905) 648-4969
(after 5 p.m.)

Calendar of Events on page 18...

Anniversaries

Hamilton Springdale
1943 1993

With joy and thankfulness to God

ARNOLD and HELEN WINTER
(ELGERSMA)

will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary on Dec. 3, 1993. Congratulations and love from your children and grandchildren:

Sam & Mary Winter — Queensville
Erin, Josie
Richard & Rita Winter — Beijing
Heather, Joshua, Kelly
Fred & Sharon Winter — Sacramento
Shirley & Floris Aukema — Brampton
Katherine, Mark
James & Anne Winter — Newmarket
Christina, Simon
Beverly & Bruce Johnston — Toronto
William

Open house on Saturday, Dec. 4, 1993, from 2-5 p.m., at their home: R.R. #1, Hwy's 88 and 400, Bradford, ON L3Z 2A4

Teachers

AYLMER, Ont.: The board of **Immanuel Chr. School** is inviting applications for a **full-time administrative/teaching position** (60%-40%), beginning August 1994. Administrative experience is required. Please send application and resume to:

John KrienseLokker, chairman
Immanuel Chr. School
75 Caverly Road
Aylmer, ON
N5H 2P6

DUNNVILLE, Ont.: Dunnville Chr. School invites applicants for a **temporary 60% position** in the **intermediate grades** from April 1 to June 30, 1994. Candidates will require some French qualifications and teaching experience in Grades 6-8. Applicants are asked to forward inquiries and resumes to:

Richard Van Egmond, Principal
Dunnville Chr. School
R.R. #1
Dunnville, ON
N1A 2W1
(905) 774-5142

LETHBRIDGE, Alta.: Immanuel Chr. School invites applications for a **Grade 1 teaching position** commencing March 14, 1994, to the end of the term. Please direct all correspondence to:

Mr. H. Konynenbelt, Principal
802-6 Avenue North
Lethbridge, AB T1H 0S1
Phone (403) 327-4223
or (403) 328-7195
FAX (403) 328-4082

RED DEER, Alta.: The **Red Deer Chr. School** is in need of a **music/drama teacher** (60%), beginning in February 1994. This position includes classes from K-6, using Kodaly/Orff methodology, Junior High band, conducting a Grade 4-6 choir and teaching Junior High drama. Although this is a maternity leave position, it is possible that it will become a permanent position for 1994/95. Applicants should be strong Christians with strengths in music and relating to all levels of students and be certifiable in the province of Alberta. Please send inquiries and applications to:

Red Deer Chr. School
14 McVicar St.
Red Deer, AB T4N 0M1
Att.: Mr. R. Duggan
Phone: (403) 346-5795

Look for our Christmas Issue next week....

Classifieds

Teachers

VANCOUVER, B.C.: Vancouver Chr. School, a denominationally diverse community currently offering Kindergarten through Grade 9, anticipates having openings at several levels in the near future. We will require a **French teacher** for **Grades 4-9** on a **part-time** (50%) basis, beginning in January 1994. At that time, we may also be looking for a **Grade 8 teacher** with a background in humanities, science and P.E. We anticipate opening a Grade 10 class in the fall of 1994.
Applicants for the 1994/95 school year with a strong background in humanities, math and computers are asked to forward their resumes to:

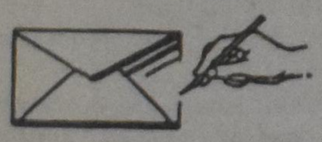
Ron Donkersloot, Principal
Vancouver Chr. School
3496 Mons Drive
Vancouver, BC
V5M 3E6

WELLANDPORT, Ont.: Wellandport Chr. School invites applications for the position of **Kindergarten teacher** to commence Jan. 3, 1994. This is a half-time position. Direct inquiries to:

W. Thies
Wellandport Chr. School
R.R. #1
Wellandport, ON L0R 2J0
(905) 386-6272 (school)
(905) 892-2155 (home)

Personal

Christian gentleman is seeking a sincere and honest lady for friendship, between the ages of 50-60. I enjoy travel, walking, country drives, movies and quiet times at home. I have a good sense of humor and am fun to be with. Please write to **File #2614, Christian Courier, 261 Martindale Rd., Unit 4, St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1**



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Toronto District Christian High School
Woodbridge, Ontario
invites applications for the position of

PRINCIPAL

to assume responsibilities starting in the **1994/95** school year.

TDCH is a school of 300 students, Grades 9 through OAC. If you are an experienced administrator and interested in leading a dedicated staff in a supportive Christian community, we invite your inquiry before **December 15, 1993.** A minimum of five years administrative experience is desirable. Contact:

Mr. Albert Romkema
Chairman - Search Committee
c/o Toronto District Christian High
377 Woodbridge Ave.
Woodbridge, ON L4L 2S8
Tel.: (905) 851-1772

Job Opportunities

PRINCIPAL
Clinton and District Christian School
Clinton, Ont.

We are presently looking for a qualified **principal** to assist us in providing Christ-centred education to our students. This is a 70 per cent administrative position and 30 per cent teaching. At the present time we have an enrolment of 222 students and a staff of 11 teachers. Send your resume to:

Mr. Gordon Kaastra
Box 545
Clinton, ON N7A 3X8

Applications must be received by January 10, 1994.

Job Opportunities

INSURANCE BROKER

We are a well-established, independent, general insurance office with a loyal expanding client base. If you have a proven sales ability, we would like to talk to you. This is an exciting career opportunity for a self-motivated person. We will give full support and offer training on a continuous basis.
Please reply in full confidence to: **File # 2615, c/o Christian Courier, 261 Martindale Rd., Unit 4, St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1.**

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When you fax your display or classified ads to us (particulary obituaries), please type them and check spelling BEFORE you transmit the text.
Thank you.
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Job Opportunities

TOUR DIRECTORS NEEDED:

A Toronto-based inbound tour operator handling international passengers needs tour directors and local representatives for Canadian Tour Programmes.
Direct or related experience an asset. Language requirements: English/German, and any of Dutch, French and Italian.
If interested in exciting seasonal work please apply in writing (include resume) to:

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Toronto, ON
M4W 2J5

No telephone calls, please. We thank all applicants. However, only those under consideration will be contacted.

Miscellaneous

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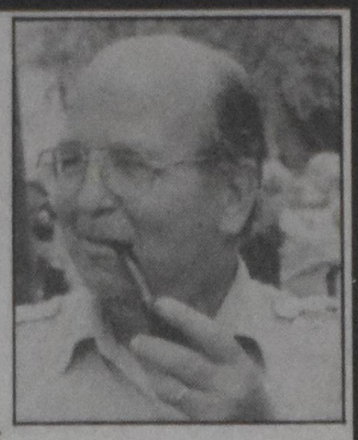
Name _____
Address _____
City/Town _____
Code _____
P.S. If possible, glue your label in this space, or enclose it.
Send to: **4-261 Martindale Rd., St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1**

Classifieds/Events

For Sale	For Sale	Miscellaneous	Job Opportunities	Job Opportunities

Books in Dutch by Herman de Jong



1. **"Twintig Verhalen"** C.C. en anderen, 102 pag., **$8.95.**
2. **"Janneke."** Een liefdesverhaal met een Canadese achtergrond dat zich afspeelt in Friesland. 110 pag. **$8.95.**
3. **"Opa Dekker in Canada,"** 102 pag. **$8.95.** "Hilarious, sometimes touching." (Prof. Henry Baron, Calvin College.)

All three for only $25.00! The booklets are modestly bound... The content is nicer than the covers.
Send cheque to: **Herman de Jong, R.R. 1, Jordan Station, ON L0R 1S0**

A fine present for Mom and Dad!

Send your questions to Peter and Marja
Confidentiality is assured

Miscellaneous

Answer the Call

No matter what your talents are, God can use you for His purposes. At RBC we will help you discover your talents by getting you involved in a variety of ministries. Teaching, leading groups, challenging younger Christians, crossing cultural boundaries and oceans – these experiences will help you choose the ministry emphasis that best fits your talents. At RBC your understanding of Scripture will grow through classes in Bible and Christian doctrine. You'll also take traditional college courses. Whether you need a 4-year degree or just a few courses, RBC can help you. Use your talents for Christian service.

Answer God's call.

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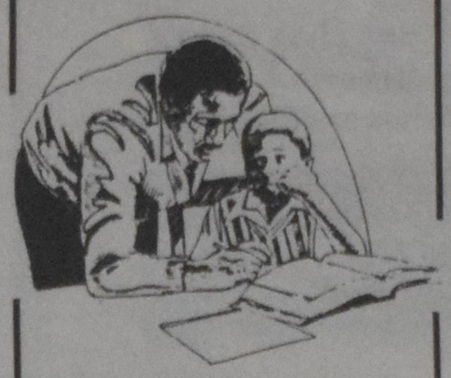

Check out our Teacher Ads on pages 16 and 17...

KINGSTON CHRISTIAN SCHOOL
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PRINCIPAL

to assume responsibilities for the 1994/95 school year. KCS is an 160 student, interdenominational school, JK - 8, located in a pleasant city, on the shores of Lake Ontario. If you are a team leader, enjoy diversity in Christian Community, and strive for educational excellence, we would like to hear from you. The position includes some teaching.

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Chairman - Board of Directors
c/o Kingston Christian School
1212 Woodbine Road
Kingston, ON K7L 4V2
Tel. (613) 384-2771 (hm) Fax (613) 542-0645

Calendar

Nov. 26-Dec. 1 Ken Medema in concert! **Nov. 26: London**, Ont.; **Dec. 1: St. Catharines**, Ont.; **Dec. 2: Bowmanville**, Ont.; **Dec. 3: Ottawa**, Ont.; **Dec. 4: Toronto**, Ont. Contact your local Chr. High School for details!

Nov. 27 Shalom Manor's annual "Tea & Craft Sale," 1-4 p.m., at Shalom Manor, **Grimsby**, Ont. Enjoy real Dutch hospitality.

Nov. 27 Sing-a-long "Messiah" by George F. Handel, presented by the Niagara Symphony Chorus, directed by Robert Cooper. Bring your own scores and sing along! At 8 p.m., St. Julia's Church, 251 Glenridge, **St. Catharines**, Ont. Adults $15. Students/seniors $12. For tickets call C.C. office at (905) 682-8311 and ask for Stan or Marian.

Nov. 27 "Healing Relationships in the Church," a one-day seminar conducted by Reinder and Diane Klein. At First CRC, **Chatham**, Ont. Info.: 1-800-567-5560.

Nov. 27 Organ concert by Andre Knevel, including audience participation. At 8 p.m., Rehoboth Can. Ref. Church, Hwy. 5, **Burlington**, Ont.

Nov. 28 Dutch worship service led by Rev. Peter Van Egmond, 3 p.m., CRC, **Ancaster**, Ont.

Nov. 28 City-wide hymn-sing, 8 p.m., First CRC, **Sarnia**, Ont.

Nov. 28 Third annual concert in support of Bethlehem Place, by "The Chapel Singers," 7:30 p.m., St. Julia's Church (251 Glenridge, **St. Catharines**, Ont. Adults $8, students $5.

Dec. 2 Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario annual convention (10 a.m.) and banquet (5:30 p.m.) at the Italian Canadian Club, 135 Ferguson St., **Guelph**, Ont. Convention speakers: Dr. Uko Zylstra and Diana & Michael O'Shea. Banquet speaker: Dr. John Redekop. Tickets: $25 (convention), and $20 (banquet). Call (519) 837-1620 by Nov. 26 noon.

Dec. 2-4 Moliere's play "Tartuffe; or The Impostor," presented by Redeemer College Theatre Arts. At 8 p.m., RC, **Ancaster**, Ont. Matinee on Dec. 1, 12 noon.

Dec. 3 "King's View Friday," open house at The King's College, **Edmonton**, Alta. Phone (403) 465-3500 to register.

Dec. 3 Fortieth anniversary celebrations at Bethel CRC, **Lacombe**, Alta. Potluck and special program on Friday at 6:30 p.m., and special thanksgiving service on Sunday, Dec. 5, at 11 a.m.

Dec. 4 "The King's Guild 15th Annual Arts & Crafts Sale." From 10 a.m. - 2 p.m., at The King's College, **Edmonton**, alta. Admission: one Canadian dollar!

Dec. 4 Salem's annual meeting, 9 a.m., Second CRC, **Brampton**, Ont. Refreshments at 8:45 a.m. Panel discussion at 10:30 a.m. on the theme: "No Safety in the Sanctuary (Abuse in the Church)." Everyone welcome. Lunch available.

Dec. 4 Christmas concert by "The Mattaniah Male Choir" (dir. H. Den Hollander) with Andre Knevel at the organ, 8 p.m., Mountainview CRC, **Grimsby**, Ont. Admission $5 (students $3).

Dec. 10 Christmas concert by the "Redeemer College Concert Choir" with chamber orchestra. At 8 p.m., RC, **Ancaster**, Ont.

Dec. 12 "Nederlandse Kerstzangdienst," assisted by the church choir, 7:30 p.m., Emmanuel Reformed Church (170 Clarke St. N.), **Woodstock**, Ont. Refreshments.

Dec. 15-22 Christmas concerts by the Ontario Chr. Music Assembly, directed by Leendert Kooij, with Andre Knevel at the organ. **Dec. 15:** 8 p.m., Rehoboth CRC, **Bowmanville**, Ont.; **Dec. 18:** 8 p.m., Willowdale United Church (Kenneth Ave.), **Willowdale**, Ont.; **Dec. 22:** 8 p.m., Melrose United Church (86 Homewood Ave.), **Hamilton**, Ont. For tickets call (416) 636-9779.

Dec. 17 Annual candlelight service with the "Adoramus-Maranatha Choir," 8 p.m., Mount Hamilton CRC, **Hamilton**, Ont.

Dec. 18 Handel's "Messiah," presented by the Georgetown Choral Society, 8 p.m., Redeemer College, **Ancaster**, Ont. Proceeds for the college.

Dec. 19 Annual candlelight service with the "Adoramus-Maranatha Choir," 7:30 p.m., Maranatha CRC, **York**, Ont.

Dec. 22 Christmas concert by the Ontario Christian Music Assembly, directed by Leendert Kooij, with Andre Knevel at the organ. At 8 p.m., Melrose United Church (Homewood/Lock & Stanley), **Hamilton**, Ont. Tickets $10, students $6.

Christian Reformed young people and intimacy

...continued from p. 13

In relating the faith which the Carls and Diannes of both groups have to their friends it was discovered that the closest same-sex friend has the greatest influence. This is to say that Carl's buddy or Dianne's girlfriend will have the greatest influence on the commitment to Christ which Carl or Dianne has. This is not to say that their parents have no influence on what Carl or Dianne believes, because Carl or Dianne is more likely to make a commitment to Christ if both of their parents are committed.

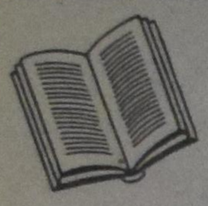
If these things are true then it would stand to reason that the type of faith which their parents and friends have is passed on to people like Carl and Dianne. If the faith is alive and growing then it is likely that Carl or Dianne will have a faith that is alive and growing. In the same light, if the faith is "just there," then it is likely that the faith which Carl or Dianne has will be "just there." This is not to say that Carl and Dianne are not responsible for the decisions they make; they are. But it is very important to remember that one's commitment to Christ and how it is shown influences others and their own commitment to Christ.

People are instruments

So what we have seen is that Carl and Dianne are more likely to share more of themselves with their friends and that their faith is influenced by what their parents and their friends believe.

I realize that nowhere in this article I have mentioned the work of the Spirit in our lives and how important it is for the Spirit to bring about the changes necessary to have a vibrant faith in our Lord. I guess that if anything, this article has focused more on the people which the Spirit can use in order to bring about a change of heart than on the actual work of the Spirit. But hopefully this research will serve as a springboard for a better look at what is involved in friendships within the Christian Reformed community and how the faith of the parents is communicated to their children.

Herb Vanderbeek lives in Winnipeg and will remain there until he's found work in his field.



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Church News

Christian Reformed Church

Calls declined:
To Essex, Ont., Rev. John Top of Mount Brydges, Ont.

Address change:
Caledonia, Ont., Maranatha-York: Box 2093, Caledonia, ON N3W 2G6.

New clerk:
Mt. Hamilton CRC, Hamilton, Ont.: Mr. Casey Flokstra, 567 West 5th Street, Hamilton, ON L9C 3P7; (905) 389-8390.

Worship in Florida:
The American Reformed Fellowship invites you to worship with them in Florida. From Dec.5 to April 1994, the group will meet at Palmview First Baptist Church, 49th Street at U.S. 41, across from Skyway Village in Palmetto. Services are at 11:15 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. Bring a lunch and enjoy a social hour between the services.
During January, February and March 1994, the reverends J. VanRietschoten, Jelle Faber and Clarence Stam will be guest ministers. If no minister is available from one of the American or Canadian Reformed Churches, taped or reading services will occur.
For information in Florida call (813) 955-4497 or (813) 729-4863. In Ontario call (905) 563-8383. Mailing address: c/o Mr. M. Vandervelde, 4219 Mountainview Rd., Beamsville, ON L0R 1B2.

Nederlandse Kerstzangdienst

Emmanuel Reformed Church
170 Clarke Street North
Woodstock, Ontario
Tel. (519) 537-6422

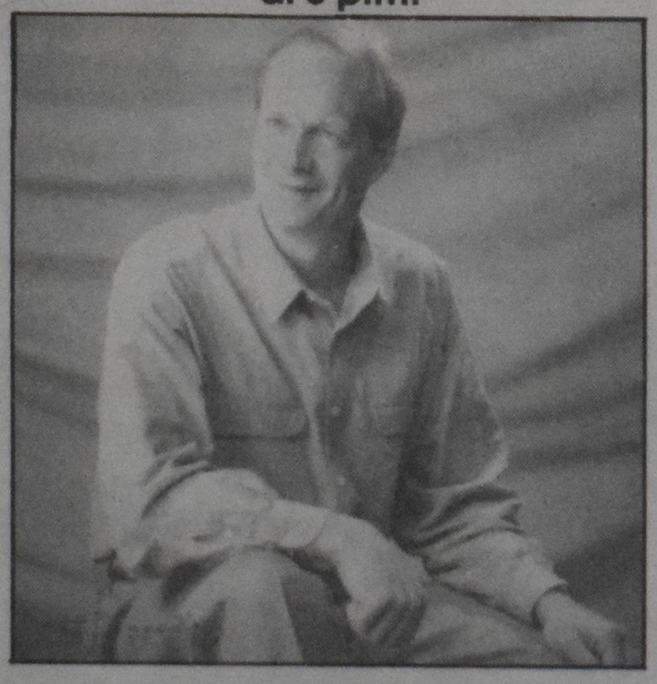
Nederlandse Kerstzangdienst met medewerking van het Kerkkoor

Wij nodigen u uit onze kerstzangdienst bij te wonen
IN ONZE NIEUWE EN RUIME KERKZAAL
Zondag, 12 december, 1993, 7.30 n.m.
VERVERSINGEN NA DE DIENST

Look for our Christmas calendar of events next week!

Ken Medema

WILD AND SANCTIFIED!
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 1, 1993
at 8 p.m.



Jubilee Fellowship Chr. Ref. Church
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News

American quadriplegic says 'death doctor' is dangerous

Dan Wooding

AGOURA HILLS, Calif. — Joni Eareckson Tada, an American quadriplegic well-known among Christians, has claimed that 65-year-old suicide doctor, Jack Kevorkian, a retired pathologist, is sending a frightening message to society that it is "better to be dead than disabled."

Tada, who was severely injured in a diving accident in Chesapeake Bay, Virginia, some 26 years ago, has accused the Michigan-based doctor, dubbed "Dr. Death" by the media, of "trying to rewrite the dictionary's definition of compassion."

Refusing to call him "Doctor Kevorkian" because he has been stripped of his medical license both in Michigan and California, Tada said from her wheelchair outside her office in Agoura Hills, Calif., "I think that Kevorkian is dangerous because he is dulling our society's sensibilities of the real needs of people with handicapping conditions. The message that many people are getting is, 'Better dead than disabled.' And instead of making it easier for people with disabilities to die, I would like our society to make it easier for them to live."

Could have been influenced

Joni Earackson Tada went on to admit that after her diving accident she was so depressed that she could have been a prime target for Kevorkian's suicide efforts.

"More than 26 years ago when I was severely depressed and suicidally despairing, I know I would have been one of Kevorkian's candidates," Tada chillingly stated. "I know I would have written him, I was so discouraged, I couldn't face life without the use of my hands or legs. I was totally paralized — unable to feed myself, unable to lift a glass of water, unable to walk, run or use my hands."

"I am just very grateful that there wasn't a "right to die" movement around back then and grateful there wasn't a Kervorkian. But the fact is, it's 26 years later and there are such things as a "How to Commit Suicide" manual."

Tada said that, if she were face-to-face with Kevorkian today she would tell him, "Quit trying to rewrite the dictionary's definition of compassion. Compassion is not a suicide contraption of carbon-monoxide poisoning. Compassion is standing by somebody's bedside and holding hands and loving them through the isolation — preventing the anger, encouraging them, ascribing positive meaning to their pain, pulling them up out of despair and praying for them in their desperate time of need. That's what true compassion is!"

Kevorkian, who has been present at the deaths of 19 people since 1990, was charged under Michigan's eight-month-old law banning assisted suicides. Convictions carry penalties of up to four years in prison and a $2,000 fine. He was released from prison on November 8 after a Detroit attorney put up the bond for him to be freed. He had been on a hunger strike drinking only water and fruit juice.

Joni Earackson Tada chronicled her pathway through the pain of her terrible accident in her best-selling book *Joni*, which was later made into a movie by World Wide Pictures in which she starred in the leading role. She has since toured the world championing the rights of the disabled, particularly in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. In October 1993, she spoke from her wheelchair on the final night of Billy Graham's historic Moscow crusade, and earlier this year she appeared on CNN with former presidential candidate Pat Buchanan.

Dan Wooding is a British journalist now living in southern California. He is the founder and international director of ASSIST (Aid to Special Saints in Strategic Times).

U.S. Court makes sex charges easier

WASHINGTON, D.C. (EP) — A unanimous U.S. Supreme Court acted Nov. 9 to make it easier to prove illegal sexual harassment in the workplace.

The court said employees did not need to prove that sexual harassment had damaged them psychologically or impaired their work performance. The ruling came in the case of a Tennessee woman who was repeatedly embarrassed by her male supervisor's sexual remarks.

An opinion authored by Justice Sandra Day O'Connor said jurors in sexual harassment cases should consider the frequency and severity of the conduct, whether the conduct is physically humiliating or threatening, and whether the conduct "unreasonably interferes" with working conditions. The decision gives juries a great deal of freedom in determining whether on-the-job sexual harassment is serious enough to warrant damages.

Pitching in for credit

PHOTO: GERRIT TER BORG

Students from Quinte Christian High School in Belleville, Ont., pitch in during a service trip to Neon, Kentucky this fall. The school has introduced a co-op credit for 110 hours of such service.

News Digest

Edited by Irene Bom

AIDS total keeps rising

ST. CATHARINES, Ont. — Recent statistics show that a total of 5,520 Canadians have died of AIDS so far, according to a list from the Niagara health services department compiled in July, 1993.

Another 8,232 Canadians (7764 male, 468 female) are in the third stage of the disease and nearing death. Those figures compare to a world total of 648,956 patients in the final AIDS stage. Africa accounts for 211,032 of these patients and the U.S. for another 289,320. It is not known how many people worldwide have the HIV virus that causes AIDS: patients can go for eight to 10 years after being infected without experiencing any symptoms.

Castrated choirboys fail to give key

LONDON, Engl. (Reuter) — Scientists from Munster, Germany trying to understand why women live longer than men have examined the records of 16th-century castrated choirboys to gauge whether the male sex hormone testosterone could be the key.

But the team found little difference between data from 50 men castrated in boyhood to retain their soprano voices to that of bass and tenor singers: both groups lived an average of 65 years.

Vicar refuses to christen baby 'devil'

LIVERPOOL, Engl. — Clive Kirke, a vicar in Liverpool, refused to baptize a child "Damian" after learning the name implied the boy was a little devil, according to the *Globe and Mail.*

Gaynor Brennan, the child's mother, reported of the vicar: "He said it was a demon's name, why didn't we christen him something like John?"